

**VIRTUE ETHICS**  
**IN THE MIDDLE AGES**  
**COMMENTARIES ON ARISTOTLE'S**  
*NICOMACHEAN ETHICS*, 1200–1500



*Edited by*

**ISTVÁN P. BEJCYZ**

*Series Editor:* A.J. VANDERJAGT

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# Virtue Ethics in the Middle Ages

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VOLUME 160

# Virtue Ethics in the Middle Ages

Commentaries on Aristotle's  
*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1200–1500

*Edited by*  
István P. Bejczy



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*On the cover: Queen Virtue (vertu) standing as a mean (le moien est ceste) between the vices of Excess (superhabondance ou trop) and Deficiency (deffaute ou peu). Miniature in the dedication copy of Nicole Oresme's French translation of the Nicomachean Ethics, completed in 1372 for King Charles V of France. MS Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique/Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België, 9505-06, f. 24<sup>ra</sup>.*

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## INTRODUCTION

ISTVÁN P. BEJCZY

No single work of philosophy exercised such a profound influence on the development of Western moral thought as Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. Until the early thirteenth century, morality was mainly discussed in a theological context, with the Bible, patristic literature, and the Latin classics as its chief authorities. After its rediscovery by the Latins, the *Nicomachean Ethics* not only gained great authority among theologians, but also provided the framework for a philosophical debate on human virtue and happiness, in apparent detachment from religious concerns. Ever since, Aristotle's work has remained a point of reference in any philosophical discussion of morality.

Two factors seem to account for the remarkable speed and relative smoothness with which the medieval reception of the *Nicomachean Ethics* proceeded. First, several Aristotelian views on the virtues were already known in the twelfth century due to their transmission by Cicero, Boethius, and other early Latin authors who were then studied with revived interest.<sup>1</sup> Second, the Parisian theologians designated in scholarly literature as "Peter the Chanter's circle" had formally recognized in the late twelfth century the existence of naturally acquired virtues that enable a moral order in the present life next to the salvific virtues infused by divine grace.<sup>2</sup> Aristotle's conception of virtue as a *habitus* formed by the repeated exercise of inborn human abilities thus did not strike thirteenth-century intellectuals as a shocking novelty. Rather than inaugurating a revolution in moral thought, the rediscovery of the *Nicomachean Ethics* encouraged medieval scholars to develop a sus-

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<sup>1</sup> See Cary J. Nederman, "Aristotelian Ethics before the *Nicomachean Ethics*: Alternative Sources of Aristotle's Concept of Virtue in the Twelfth Century", *Parergon* NS 7 (1989), 55–75; repr. in id., *Medieval Aristotelianism and Its Limits: Classical Traditions in Moral and Political Philosophy, 12th–15th Centuries* (Aldershot, 1997), item I.

<sup>2</sup> See István P. Bejczy, "The Problem of Natural Virtue", in *Virtue and Ethics in the Twelfth Century*, ed. István P. Bejczy and Richard G. Newhauser (Leiden, 2005), 133–154.

tained philosophical discussion of human virtue which accentuated the existing differences between a secularized and a religious approach to morality.

The accentuating of these differences is in itself a phenomenon of great historical interest which in the medieval period already led to diverging reactions. While some philosophers readily explored the possibilities of creating a moral system by the sole aid of human reason, many theologians made an effort to bridge the widening gap between philosophical ethics and moral theology. Ironically, neither party achieved a complete success in the Middle Ages. On the one hand, recent scholarship shows that the moral views developed by seemingly convinced Aristotelians such as the first commentators on the *Nicomachean Ethics* depend in crucial respects on Christian ideas.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, many of the solutions proposed by theologians and others in order to harmonize Christian and Aristotelian morality strike present-day scholars as heterogeneous,<sup>4</sup> despite the still current notion that notably Thomas Aquinas forged a masterful synthesis of faith and reason even in the domain of ethics.

The most intense form of reception of the *Nicomachean Ethics* in the Middle Ages is provided by the commentaries written on the work itself, and it is on these commentaries that the present collection concentrates. The medieval commentary tradition starts in the first half of the thirteenth century. The first, partially surviving, Latin translations of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, known as the *Ethica vetus* (the oldest translated part, covering books 2–3) and the *Ethica nova* (book 1), are the object of six known commentaries, presumably written between 1230 and 1250 by Parisian Arts Masters. One of these commentaries is attributed to the Dominican friar Robert Kilwardby, the others are

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<sup>3</sup> A notable example is the philosophical discussion of happiness in the thirteenth century. See Georg Wieland, *Ethica-scientia practica: Die Anfänge der philosophischen Ethik im 13. Jahrhundert* (Münster, 1981), 143–197; Anthony J. Celano, “The ‘finis hominis’ in the Thirteenth Century Commentaries on Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*”, *Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 58 (1986), 23–31; Valeria Buffon, “Philosophers and Theologians on Happiness: An Analysis of Early Latin Commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics*”, *Laval théologique et philosophique* 60 (2004), 449–476; Irene Zavattero, “Felicità e Principio Primo: Teologia e filosofia nei primi commenti latini all’*Ethica nicomachea*”, *Rivista di storia della filosofia* 61 (2006), 109–136.

<sup>4</sup> See Bonnie Kent, *Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington, 1995), 34, 254; see also Jörn Müller, *Natürliche Moral und philosophische Ethik bei Albertus Magnus* (Münster, 2001), 220–221 (judging Albert’s use of different philosophical systems, not his compromising between philosophy and theology).

anonymous. The commentaries of the early thirteenth century have drawn proper attention in the last few years, in the wake of Georg Wieland's monograph on these texts.<sup>5</sup> Until recently only one of these commentaries had been edited, but the situation is rapidly improving.<sup>6</sup>

A translation of all ten books of the *Nicomachean Ethics* was not completed until 1246/48 by Robert Grosseteste. *Recensio pura* is the name given to the original translation; the *recensio recognita*, which appears to have circulated more widely, is a revision dating from about 1260 and formerly attributed to William of Moerbeke. The first to write full commentaries on this translation were Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas. Apart from the *Super Ethica*, a literal commentary with adjunct questions, Albert wrote the *Ethica* in the style of a paraphrase. Aquinas's literal commentary is titled *Sententia libri Ethicorum*.

The commentaries of Albert and Aquinas are the only ones to enjoy unbroken attention in scholarship, thanks to the celebrity of their authors, their influence on later commentaries, and their availability in modern editions. Conversely, the huge majority of the commentaries written from the late thirteenth to the late fifteenth centuries suffer from relative scholarly neglect, due in part to the lack of modern editions for any of these texts.<sup>7</sup> Yet it is from the late thirteenth century that the commentary tradition considerably expanded. Aquinas's *Sententia* was a major source for several commentators of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries (John of Tytynsale, Henry of Friemar, Walter Burley; Burley, in turn, heavily influenced John Dedecus and

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<sup>5</sup> Wieland, *Ethica-scientia practica*.

<sup>6</sup> The Parisian *Lectura in Ethicam nouam* was edited by René-Antoine Gauthier, "Le cours sur l'*Ethica noua* d'un maître ès arts de Paris (vers 1235-1240)", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 50 (1975), 71-141. Recently Martin Tracey's edition of the Naples *Scriptum super librum Ethicorum* appeared: Martin J. Tracey, "An Early 13th-Century Commentary on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* I, 4-10: The *Lectio cum questionibus* of an Arts-Master at Paris in MS Napoli, Biblioteca Nazionale, VIII G 8, ff. 4<sup>r</sup>-9<sup>v</sup>", *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 17 (2006), 23-69. Other editions are being prepared by Valeria Buffon (Pseudo-Peckham), Anthony Celano (Robert Kilwardby), Claude Lafleur (*Commentarium abrinense in Ethicam ueterem*), and Irene Zavattero (the Paris *Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*).

<sup>7</sup> However, the recently defended thesis of Iacopo Costa, "Il commento all'*Ethica nicomachea* di Radulfo Brito: Edizione critica del testo con uno studio critico, storico e dottrinale" (Ph.D. diss. Università degli studi di Salerno/Université de Paris IV-Sorbonne, 2007), contains an edition of Radulphus Brito's commentary. A revised version of this edition will appear in print. Also, Costa prepares editions of two Parisian commentaries of the late thirteenth century: the commentary ascribed to James of Douai and the so-called Erlangen commentary.

Albert of Saxony), while it was paraphrased or extracted in this period by Peter of Corveheda and a number of Italian scholars (Conrad of Ascoli, Guido Vernani, Paul of Venice). By contrast, the six or seven interrelated question commentaries composed at the Parisian Arts Faculty around 1300, once erroneously labelled “Averroist”, betray little influence from Aquinas’s *Sententia*, but borrow in varying degrees from his *Summa theologiae*; their possible connection with the commentary of Guido Terreni has still to be established. The most influential commentaries of the fourteenth century, however, were those of Gerald of Odo and especially John Buridan, who heavily borrowed from Gerald’s work. Not even Buridan’s question commentary, which survives (like the *Sententia* of Aquinas) in just over one hundred known manuscripts, has been given the scholarly attention it deserves.<sup>8</sup>

The fifteenth-century commentary tradition was *terra incognita* until a few years ago, but is now beginning to be explored thanks to a few groundbreaking studies. Christoph Flüeler and Sigrid Müller have shed light on the teaching of ethics at the newly founded universities of Central Europe, notably at Vienna, where Buridan enjoyed such authority that his commentary even replaced Aristotle’s work in the classroom.<sup>9</sup> David Lines has investigated the commentary tradition in Italy, where several humanists composed new translations of the *Nicomachean Ethics* as alternatives to Grosseteste’s version.<sup>10</sup> Notably the translations of Leonardo Bruni (1416/17) and John Argyropoulos (1450s) served as a base for commentaries, first by Italians, later in the century by scholars from other countries. Bruni’s translation was used by, among others, Marsilio Ficino, Niccolò Tignosi, Pedro Martínez of Osma, and Peter

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<sup>8</sup> The only existing monographs are Bernd Michael, “Johannes Buridan: Studien zu seinem Leben, seinen Werken und zur Rezeption seiner Theorien im Europa des späten Mittelalters” (inaug. diss. Freie Universität Berlin, 1985), and Gerhard Krieger, *Der Begriff der praktischen Vernunft nach Johannes Buridanus* (Münster, 1986). Monographs on Gerald of Odo are entirely absent; see, however, Bonnie Kent, “Aristotle and the Franciscans: Gerald Odonis’ Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics” (Ph.D. diss. Columbia University, New York, 1984).

<sup>9</sup> Christoph Flüeler, “Ethica in Wien anno 1438: Die Kommentare der aristotelischen ‘Ethik’ an der Wiener Artistenfakultät”, in *Schriften im Umkreis mitteleuropäischer Universitäten um 1400: Lateinische und volkssprachige Texte aus Prag, Wien und Heidelberg: Unterschiede, Gemeinsamkeiten, Wechselbeziehungen*, ed. Fritz P. Knapp, Jürgen Miethke, and Manuela Niesner (Leiden, 2004), 92–138; Sigrid Müller, “Wiener Ethikkommentare des 15. Jahrhunderts”, *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 17 (2006), 445–467.

<sup>10</sup> David F. Lines, *Aristotle’s Ethics in the Italian Renaissance (ca. 1300–1650): The Universities and the Problem of Moral Education* (Leiden, 2002).

of Castrovól; the translation of Argyropoulos by Donato Acciaiuoli and, near the very end of the century, the Parisian humanist Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples. Meanwhile, the most widely read Parisian commentaries of the fifteenth century, still based on Grosseteste's translation, were those of Jean Le Tourneur (Johannes Versor) and Pierre Tartaret, who are known as a Thomist and a Scotist, respectively. Studies on any of these late medieval commentaries—qualified by Jill Kraye as being for the most part “plodding, pedantic and conspicuously lacking in originality”<sup>11</sup>—remain very rare.

The contributions in the present volume are spread chronologically, devoting attention to each of the phases in which the medieval reception of the *Nicomachean Ethics* took place. All articles concentrate, moreover, on one or several of the moral and intellectual virtues around which Aristotle's ethic revolves. Many authors compare the discussion of the virtues in the medieval commentaries with contemporary theological debate, so that the specific, philosophical character of these commentaries (or the lack of it) comes into relief.

The articles of Valeria Buffon, Irene Zavattero, and Martin Tracey are related to the early thirteenth century, the initial phase of the medieval reception of Aristotle's work. Buffon opens the volume with a study on the character and function of the intellectual virtues in the early commentary tradition. She argues that the commentators justified the Aristotelian division between intellectual and “customary” (moral) virtues through the two-faced soul theory founded by Plotinus as a metaphysical concept, adapted by Avicenna to psychology, and applied by the commentators in the field of ethics. The function of the intellectual virtues is to produce a joyful knowledge or contemplation of the highest good or the First (*primum*).

Zavattero addresses the relative functions of moral and intellectual virtues in the same commentaries. Her conclusion is that moral virtues operate in relation to the individual body, intellectual virtues in relation to the individual soul. With one important exception, the early commentators tend to disregard the social or civil dimension of the moral virtues which is nevertheless essential to Aristotle's system. Their exaltation of the contemplative life goes together with a devaluation of the

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<sup>11</sup> Jill Kraye, “Renaissance Commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics*”, in *The Vocabulary of Teaching and Research between Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. Olga Weijers (Turnhout, 1995), 96; repr. in ead., *Classical Traditions in Renaissance Philosophy* (Aldershot, 2002), item VI.

civil or political life. As in contemporary theology, the moral subject of the commentaries is the human individual whose aim is to achieve union with God.

Tracey analyzes the meaning of the term *virtus* in one of the early commentaries, the so-called Naples Commentary on the *Ethica nova*. Although the term does not actually refer in this text to intellectual or moral virtue, Tracey shows the commentator's approach to be typical of the Parisian Arts milieu before 1250. Moreover, Tracey infers three methodological principles of Christian virtue ethics from the Naples commentary: moral philosophy eschews appeal to a comprehensive account of the transcendental good; moral philosophy depends on moral psychology; and moral philosophy recognizes that ultimate human happiness is not attainable in this life.

The next three contributions to the volume discuss individual virtues in the commentaries of Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas. Jörn Müller focusses on the virtue of courage or fortitude. In his view, both Albert and Aquinas expand Aristotle's notion of courage in such a way as to allow the inclusion of martyrdom, the prime instance of fortitude from a theological point of view. Yet the difference between civic courage, an acquired virtue through which one acts for the public good, and religious courage, an infused virtue through which one acts for the sake of God, is not mentioned in their commentaries. Neither do they connect courage with patience, which is central to the account of courage in Aquinas's theological writings. Their aim is not to interpret Aristotle religiously but to present a philosophically defensible reading of his text.

Tobias Hoffmann considers Albert's and Aquinas's reflections on magnanimity. He discusses the strengths and weaknesses of their interpretations of this virtue (unilaterally approached to honour by Albert, redefined as aiming at greatness by Aquinas) and examines notably Aquinas's solutions to a number of specific problems, such as magnanimity's status as a specific virtue and its role regarding the connection of the moral virtues. Thereupon Hoffmann shows how both commentators attempted to resolve the conflict between magnanimity and humility by consistently presenting the supercilious aspects of Aristotle's portrait of the magnanimous as signs of a humble attitude.

Matthias Perkams appraises the interpretation of Aristotelian justice in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* alone. He shows that Aquinas's account of justice contains digressions on natural and positive law which have no base in Aristotle's text but are of special interest to Aquinas himself.

Aquinas's account, however, is not informed by the theological doctrine of divine law, while not even all elements of natural law mentioned in his *Summa theologiae* recur in it. Perkams concludes that Aquinas neither consistently read the *Nicomachean Ethics* from a theological perspective, nor developed his own ethical theory in its most mature form in his commentary on this work.

Two articles are devoted to the commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics* written in the late thirteenth century by Parisian Arts Masters. Iacopo Costa examines the notion of heroic virtue in these commentaries against the background of the earlier discussions by Albert and Aquinas. The Parisian Masters implicitly refute the interpretations of their predecessors by not considering heroic virtue as either a duplicate of continence (as Albert did), a pre-eminence of the rational soul, or a divine gift (as Aquinas did), but as a disposition of the human will which produces perfect happiness by pushing the moral subject to the knowledge of eternal substances. Thus the Masters assert a philosophical ideal of human perfection, even though their explanation is as alien to Aristotle's thought as it is to Christian ideals.

Marco Toste considers the Parisian commentators' notion of virtuous friendship and finds that they do not attach the same importance to it as Aristotle. For the Arts Masters, friends are external, accidental goods; contemplation, the end of the philosophical life, is not regarded by them as being achieved through a dialogue between friends, but as consisting in individual speculation. The relation of the happy man to other virtuous men is always conceived as a hierarchical relation between master and student, and thus as a relation between beneficiary and benefited. This precludes the idea that philosophers reach happiness through speculation with their equals in an ideal academy.

The next three articles take the entire commentary tradition from the mid-thirteenth to the mid-fourteenth centuries into account. István Bejczy examines how the scheme of the cardinal virtues, which is absent from the *Nicomachean Ethics* itself, figures in the commentaries on Aristotle's work. Rejecting Stoic conceptions, Albert and Aquinas insist that prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance are the four principal virtues according to their Aristotelian definitions, since as such they relate to the foremost aspects of moral action. Their view had only moderate success in the commentary tradition and was replaced in the fourteenth century by Gerald of Odo's and John Buridan's doctrine that the cardinal virtues—defined more broadly than Aristotle did—comprise the essence of moral goodness.



Roberto Lambertini surveys the interpretation of “political prudence” from Eustratius (whose commentary was translated by Robert Grosseteste together with the *Nicomachean Ethics*) to John Buridan. He finds that *prudencia politica* assumes two different meanings in the commentary tradition. In a general sense, it designates prudence concerned with the common good; in a more specific sense, it denotes the prudence of subjects or ordinary citizens as opposed to the “legislative prudence” attributed to the rulers. Although these views imply the recognition of different spheres of ethical activity, the commentators do not accept a complete separation of individual ethics and politics.

Pavel Blažek appraises the discussion of virginity in the commentary tradition from Aquinas to Buridan. The *Nicomachean Ethics* seemed to call the medieval ideal of virginity into question. Not only does virginity not figure among Aristotle’s virtues, but the Aristotelian concept of *insensibilitas* suggested that sexual abstinence might actually be a vice. Blažek looks at the diverse strategies developed by medieval commentators of the *Nicomachean Ethics* to meet this challenge. Of all commentators, only Buridan appears to deny the virtuous character of virginity, except for some rare cases. Blažek tries to explain Buridan’s position by assuming that his account of virginity is satirical in nature.

Finally, Christoph Flüeler presents a richly documented reconstruction of the teaching of ethics at the University of Vienna in the first half of the fifteenth century. A course on ethics consisted of lectures on the first six books of Buridan’s commentary and exercises on the first five books. Taking a question on magnanimity as an example, Flüeler is able to show that ethical teaching and the formulation of moral doctrines followed fixed patterns for long periods of time and combined the views of authors of the *via antiqua* (Thomas Aquinas, Gerald of Odo) as well as the *via moderna* to which Buridan belonged. Flüeler’s study is followed by an appendix with editions of the question on magnanimity from most surviving Viennese commentaries composed between 1410 and 1454.

If the articles collected in this volume show anything, it is the diverse and surprisingly creative ways in which medieval intellectuals during three centuries dealt with the prime model of philosophical ethics available to the Western world. Confronting the *Nicomachean Ethics* with Platonic, Stoic, and most notably Christian ideas, the commentators active between 1200 and 1500 developed moral theories which not always faithfully reflected Aristotle’s system but certainly fitted the intellectual climate of medieval society and perhaps even met some of its

moral needs. Rather than as steady progress toward a state of harmony, whether or not followed by a phase of disintegration, the history of medieval moral thought may be viewed as a continuous groping for workable compromises between widely diverging philosophical and religious traditions. And perhaps it is these conciliating and pragmatic aspects which make the study of this history particularly instructive.



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I

THE EARLY THIRTEENTH CENTURY



THE STRUCTURE OF THE SOUL,  
INTELLECTUAL VIRTUES, AND THE ETHICAL IDEAL  
OF MASTERS OF ARTS IN EARLY COMMENTARIES  
ON THE *NICOMACHEAN ETHICS*

VALERIA A. BUFFON

*Université Laval*

The early commentaries on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* show the product of meticulous discussions held at the Faculty of Arts in the University of Paris between 1230 and 1250.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, they do not always interpret Aristotle's sayings in ways that a contemporary reader would expect. This cannot be thoroughly explained by peculiarities of the texts, namely, the partial Latin translations circulating in the first half of thirteenth century that Masters of Arts knew as the *Ethica nova* (book 1) and the *Ethica vetus* (books 2 and 3). These translations were presumably made by Burgundio of Pisa before 1150;<sup>2</sup> not until

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<sup>1</sup> This paper considers the following commentaries: 1. Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem*, MSS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. misc. c. 71 (= O), ff. 2<sup>ra</sup>–52<sup>rb</sup>; Florence, BN Conv. sopp. G.4.853 (= F), ff. 1<sup>ra</sup>–77<sup>va</sup>; Prague, NK III.F.10 (= Pr), ff. 12<sup>ra</sup>–23<sup>va</sup> (incomplete witness); Avranches, BM 232 (= A), ff. 123<sup>r</sup>–125<sup>v</sup> (incomplete witness). 2. *Lectura in Ethicam nouam*, ed. René-Antoine Gauthier, "Le cours sur l'*Ethica nova* d'un maître ès arts de Paris (vers 1235–1240)", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 42 (1975), 71–141; the *Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*, still unedited, is found in MSS Paris, BnF lat. 3804A, ff. 152<sup>ra</sup>–159<sup>vb</sup>, 241<sup>ra</sup>–247<sup>vb</sup>; lat. 3572, ff. 226<sup>ra</sup>–235<sup>ra</sup>. 3. Robert Kilwardby, *Commentarii supra libros Ethicorum*, MSS Cambridge, Peterhouse 206 (= C), ff. 285<sup>ra</sup>–307<sup>vb</sup>; Pr, ff. 1<sup>ra</sup>–11<sup>vb</sup> (incomplete witness). 4. *Commentarium abricense in Ethicam ueterem*, A, ff. 90<sup>r</sup>–123<sup>r</sup>. In quotations of unedited texts, I will usually keep the orthography of manuscripts.

<sup>2</sup> According to René-Antoine Gauthier's introduction to Aristotle, *Ethica nicomachea*, ed. René-Antoine Gauthier (Leiden–Brussels, 1972–1974), the *Ethica nova* and *vetus* (both edited in this work) came from two different translations: one from the end of the twelfth century (*Ethica vetus*, of which books 2 and 3 remain), the other from the beginning of thirteenth century (*Ethica nova*; book 1 survives in 40 manuscripts, some excerpts of books 4 to 10 are found in only two manuscripts). However, Fernand Bossier,

1246–1248 did Robert Grosseteste achieve a complete translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.<sup>3</sup> Some interpretations of early commentators on the *Ethics* can be explained by other factors that influenced their worldview. Here we focus especially on Masters of Arts' analysis of Aristotle's classification of the virtues, which can at first seem quite odd. However, their interpretation can be clarified by elucidating the specific textual transmission that leads to it, which will in turn help us to better understand certain concepts used by these commentators.

For instance, one of the concepts to be clarified is the two-faced structure of the soul that explains the division of virtues: one lower face that governs the body through moral or customary (*consuetudinales*) virtues, another upper face that contemplates superior things through intellectual (*intellectuales*) virtues. In addition, the contemplation and knowledge of higher things, or more precisely, of God, is identified by Masters of Arts as the goal of human life. Therefore, it appears that intellectual virtues are the vehicle to, and even the achievement of, the human end, which is the knowledge of God.

Most early thirteenth-century commentaries (those written before Grosseteste's complete translation) share an ethical ideal that recalls the 'Aristotelian ideal of contemplation'<sup>4</sup> exposed in the tenth book (chapter 7) of the *Ethics*. This Aristotelian ideal is a state of sufficiency (happiness), which results from the exercise of virtues. However, it is not just any virtue, but rather perfect virtue that finally leads to happiness. Hence, the happiest are those who act according to the virtue of

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"L'élaboration du vocabulaire philosophique chez Burgundio de Pise", in *Aux origines du lexique philosophique européen: L'influence de la "Latinitas"*, ed. Jacqueline Hamesse (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1997), 81–102, determined on a lexicographic study that the *Ethica vetus* and *nova* belong to the same translation prepared by Burgundio of Pisa before 1150. There are several important consequences of this difference of opinions, especially concerning other texts' dating. In any case, it is important to note that Masters of Arts—as it is evident from their commentaries, introductions to philosophy, and guides for students—called *Ethica vetus* the longer or shorter version of books 2 and 3 translation, and they called *Ethica nova* the translation of book 1; see René-Antoine Gauthier, "Saint Thomas et l'Éthique à Nicomaque", in Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri politicorum, Opera omnia* (Rome, 1882–) 48: xv. Hence, when Masters of Arts comment on the *Ethica nova*, they comment only on book 1 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Bernard G. Dod, "Aristoteles Latinus", in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy: From the Rediscovery of Aristotle to the Disintegration of Scholasticism, 1100–1600*, ed. Norman Kretzmann, Anthony Kenny, and Jan Pinborg (Cambridge, 1982), 77.

<sup>4</sup> First so named by Werner Jaeger and later reconsidered in the context of Islamic philosophy by Majid Fakhry, "The Contemplative Ideal in Islamic Philosophy: Aristotle and Avicenna", *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 14 (1976), 137–145.

wisdom (*sophia*), which is knowledge of divine things, and this virtue is exercised by the intellect, the best part of the soul. It is surprising that Masters of Arts seem to be aware of this ideal when the tenth book of the *Ethics* was not yet available for them. To solve this apparent dilemma, we will first briefly describe the elements of Aristotle's ideal of contemplation that are present in different combinations among the various interpretations of Masters of Arts. We will then search for some possible sources of this ideal.

The first element of the contemplative ideal presented in these early Latin commentaries is happiness defined as the highest good (*summum bonum*), which Masters of Arts know from the first book of *Nicomachean Ethics*, the *Ethica nova*. They interpret this highest good both as God Himself<sup>5</sup> and as a certain knowledge (*cognitio*) of this highest good (God). Thus, happiness is identified as the highest good (*summum bonum*), which in turn is identified with God himself, and then by transitivity, happiness is identified with God. Consequently, both happiness and the highest good have an ambiguity: they are either God himself (the First, *Primum*) or the knowledge of God (*cognitio Primi*). This is a result of the combination of two things: on the one hand, the traditional 'evident' link for medieval thinkers between the highest good and God, and on the other hand, the Aristotelian account of happiness as a human activity or operation (*operatio*), knowledge being considered by some Masters as an operation.<sup>6</sup> Some Masters resolve this ambiguity by defining two kinds of happiness, a perfect or uncreated one and an imperfect or created one. Happiness considered as God is perfect, whereas considered as a human operation it is imperfect.<sup>7</sup>

In addition, we find a second element of the contemplative ideal. Masters of Arts consider knowledge (*cognitio*) to be the most perfect

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Compendium examinatorium parisiense* 92, ed. Claude Lafleur and Joanne Carrier, *Le "Guide de l'étudiant" d'un maître anonyme de la Faculté des arts de Paris au XIIIe siècle: Édition critique provisoire du ms. Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, Ripoll 109, fol. 134<sup>ra</sup>–158<sup>ra</sup>* (Québec, 1992), 58: "Item queritur utrum felicitas de qua hic agitur sit causata. Et uidetur quod non. Probat enim hic auctor quod illa est bonum perfectissimum. Sed nichil est tale nisi Primum. Ergo hec felicitas est ut Primum".

<sup>6</sup> Cf. below, n. 18.

<sup>7</sup> See Georg Wieland, *Ethica-scientia practica: Die Anfänge der philosophischen Ethik im 13. Jahrhundert* (Münster, 1981), 143–197; Anthony J. Celano, "The 'finis hominis' in the Thirteenth Century Commentaries on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 58 (1986), 23–31; Valeria Buffon, "Philosophers and Theologians on Happiness: An Analysis of Early Latin Commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics*", *Laval théologique et philosophique* 60 (2004), 449–476.



activity of the soul (or of its noblest faculty, the intellect), which they know from *De anima* and the *Metaphysics*, as well as from Latin translations of many Arabic sources, such as Avicenna's and Algazel's works. Thus, they link happiness with intellectual virtues since both include knowledge. Although the *Ethica nova* does not analyse intellectual virtues in detail, Masters can elaborate on them.

These elements are combined in the following manner. The ethical ideal, as we can deduce from most Masters' opinions, includes the First<sup>8</sup> as the object of intellectual activity. This intellectual activity is more precisely described as delightful knowledge (*cognitio*), or knowledge and affection (*affectus, dilectio*) of the First, which is immediately identified with the highest good and the ultimate end<sup>9</sup> that Aristotle mentions in book 1.<sup>10</sup> Such knowledge of the First is sometimes found in intellectual virtues, as it is in the *Commentarium abrinense in Ethicam ueterem*, the *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem* of Pseudo-Peckham, and the *Divisio scientiarum* of Arnulf of Provence,<sup>11</sup> and sometimes also be found in happiness, as it is in Pseudo-Peckham and the *Commentary of Paris*.<sup>12</sup> The

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<sup>8</sup> *Primus* or *Primum* is a common philosophical term for God, adopted in the West during the reception of Arabic philosophy. The term was taken from the *Liber de causis*, attributed then to Aristotle. See *Liber de causis*, ed. Adriaan A.J. Pattin, *Tijdschrift voor filosofie* 28 (1966), 90–203. On the reception of this work, see Cristina d'Ancona Costa, *Recherches sur le Liber de causis* (Paris, 1995), esp. 195–228; for another example, see Avicenna, *Liber de philosophia prima sive scientia divina*, ed. Simone van Riet (Louvain–Leiden, 1980).

<sup>9</sup> On *felicitas* as a final end, see Wieland, *Ethica-scientia practica*, 143–197; Celano, “The ‘finis hominis’”.

<sup>10</sup> See above, n. 5.

<sup>11</sup> *Commentarium abrinense in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 90<sup>r</sup>: “Natura anima nata est ordinari in bono, uel ab essentia a qua perficitur uidelicet Prima Essentia uel etiam comparatione essentie quam nata est perficere. Est autem nata perfici ab Essentia Prima. In qua comparatione habet uirtutem intellectualem eo quod non potest ei coniungi nisi per cognitionem et affectum... Vnde uirtus predicta in cognitione et affectum consistit”; Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem*, F f. 33<sup>vb</sup>, O f. 29<sup>rb</sup>: “Fronesis uero est cognitio summi boni cum dilectione eius, prout potest (esse) cognitio summi boni, et per intelligibiles creaturas in quibus maxime relucet eius ymago secundum quod possibile est in creaturis suis relucere”; Arnulf of Provence, *Divisio scientiarum*, ed. Claude Lafleur, in id. and Joanne Carrier, *Quatre introductions à la philosophie au XIIIe siècle: Textes critiques et étude historique* (Montréal–Paris, 1988), 336: “per intensum affectum et amorem inflammatur ut Illi, quantum possibile est, se conformet, adquiritur ei habitus uirtutis qui dicitur *fronesis*”. See also *In Ethicam nouam*, MS Naples, BN VIII.G.8, f. 4<sup>rb</sup>: “est etiam vita contemplativa, quae est per apprehensionem et contemplationem Primae Causae”. Two of these definitions refer to *fronesis*, the highest intellectual virtue. For more on this, see René-Antoine Gauthier, “Arnoul de Provence et la doctrine de la *fronesis*, vertu mystique suprême”, *Revue du moyen âge latin* 19 (1963), 139–170.

<sup>12</sup> Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem*, F f. 4<sup>ra</sup>, O f. 4<sup>rb</sup>: “Beat-

principal difference between these concepts is that intellectual virtues can be attained in this life, while things are not so clear-cut concerning happiness.<sup>13</sup> Consequently, even if Masters agree that happiness is the highest good, and that this implies knowledge of and delight in the First, they are nevertheless interested primarily in such knowledge and delight during this lifetime,<sup>14</sup> which leads some of them to theorize about intellectual virtues.

The ideal of delightful knowledge of the First has been presented as a topic of Greek-Arabic Peripateticism.<sup>15</sup> The first readers of Peripatetic philosophy—translated during the twelfth century—had interpreted (in works such as *De anima et de potentiis eius*) the agent intellect as a part of the human soul,<sup>16</sup> capable of uniting with God, the source of all knowledge.<sup>17</sup> Although many Masters embrace this theory, they have various ways of organizing the soul, as well as different manners of conceptualizing the way to get such delightful knowledge of the First. Union or conjunction with the First is achieved through knowledge or contemplation of the First,<sup>18</sup> or even through our soul's participation in the First.<sup>19</sup> An intuition of the First is, in some cases, also considered

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itudo enim nominat summum bonum in quantum habet esse in nobis per cognitionem et affectum"; *Lectura in Ethicam nouam*, p. 107: "Iterum, felices operantur, scilicet in aspiciendo Primum et cognoscendo; vnde cognoscere Primum et diligere sunt opera alicuius cum habet felicitatem".

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Buffon, "Philosophers and Theologians on Happiness".

<sup>14</sup> This is an important matter of discussion among Masters of Arts. Theologians think that happiness (as knowledge of the First) is only possible in the afterlife, while Masters find (in some philosophical sources) the possibility of happiness during this lifetime; however, Masters appear to handle this 'problem' quite well. They found a way to avoid confronting theologians by considering intellectual virtues as constituting knowledge of the First. For a complete analysis of the discussion on happiness (*felicitas*) in this lifetime, see Buffon, "Philosophers and Theologians on Happiness".

<sup>15</sup> See *De anima et de potentiis eius*, ed. René-Antoine Gauthier, "Le traité *De anima et de potentiis eius* d'un maître ès arts (vers 1225): Introduction et texte critique", *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 66 (1982), 3–55.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* See also the observations on the structure of the soul in *Lectura in Ethicam nouam*, pp. 101–102; cf. René-Antoine Gauthier, "Notes sur les débuts (1225–1240) du premier 'averroïsme'", *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 66 (1982), 321–374.

<sup>17</sup> *Lectura in Ethicam nouam*, p. 115: "uirtus secundum quam attenditur uita contemplatiua est medium quo nobis uinitur felicitas". See also n. 20.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107: "Iterum, felices operantur, scilicet in aspiciendo Primum et cognoscendo; vnde cognoscere Primum et diligere sunt opera alicuius cum habet felicitatem. Et hoc modo intelligit auctor cum dicit quod ipsi dicebant quod uita et operatio sunt idem felicitati".

<sup>19</sup> *Compendium examinatorium parisiense* 93, p. 59: "Ad hoc dicendum quod in ueritate in quantum est a parte Primi unumquodque est natum participare Ipsum, sed ex parte

to be an illumination of the soul received from the First, as it is in the *Commentary of Paris* on the *Ethica vetus*.<sup>20</sup> This intuition of the First, a knowledge that entails delight or affection,<sup>21</sup> is included in a special kind of knowledge, about separated beings, which has already been examined by Masters such as Iohannes Pagus and Arnulf of Provence in their classification of sciences.<sup>22</sup>

Concerning the ways of obtaining delightful knowledge of the First, Masters argue that it is attained through the pursuit of both moral (or customary) and intellectual virtues. The process leading to a state involving both types of virtues requires a deep analysis of the soul's structure, which underlies this discussion of virtues. This structure is revealed when commentators develop questions concerning the exhaustiveness (*sufficiencia*) and the accuracy of Aristotle's division between intellectual and moral virtues. One of the most important questions, including an objection based upon Macrobius's alternative theory,<sup>23</sup>

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recipientium potest esse defectus. Nam nata est enim felicitas inesse diligentibus solum et affectantibus per amorem et cognitionem. Huiusmodi autem, que sic affectant Primum et diligunt, (sunt) solum due substantie, scilicet homo et angelus". Obviously, there is here a mixture of proper Aristotelian components and Neo-Platonic components. For Neo-Platonic nuances of the theories of Masters of Arts, see Claude Laffleur and Joanne Carrier, "Une figure métissée du platonisme médiéval: Jean le Page et le prologue de son commentaire (vers 1231–1240) sur l'*Isagoge* de Porphyre", in *Une philosophie dans l'histoire: Hommages à Raymond Klibansky*, ed. Bjarne Melkevic and Jean-Marc Narbonne (Québec, 2000), 105–160.

<sup>20</sup> *Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 153<sup>ra</sup>: "Et intellectus agens plus recipit illuminationem a Primo quam possibilis. Similiter est a parte partis motiue: in motiua enim parte anime humane, que uocatur pars desideratiua, est duplex uirtus seu pars, scilicet suprema et inferiora et suprema pars plus illuminatur a Primo quam inferior pars. Et quia illa suprema pars maxime illuminatur a lumine Primi influente". See also *De anima et de potenciis eius*, pp. 53–54: "hic notandum est quod alique forme sunt in intellectu possibili quas non abstrahit intellectus agens a fantasmatis, set anima acquirit eas per rectam operationem, sicut sunt iusticia, prudentia; et alique sunt quas acquirit per superiorem illuminationem, ut quedam que intelliguntur de Deo et diuino modo".

<sup>21</sup> *Lectura in Ethicam nouam*, p. 107; see also Arnulf of Provence, *Divisio scientiarum*, p. 336; Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem*, F f. 4<sup>ra</sup>, O f. 4<sup>rb</sup>: "Beatitudo enim nominat summum bonum in quantum habet esse in nobis per cognitionem et affectum".

<sup>22</sup> For a remarkable study of this topic, see Claude Laffleur and Joanne Carrier, "Abstraction, séparation et tripartition de la philosophie théorétique: Quelques éléments de l'arrière-fond farabien et artien de Thomas d'Aquin, *Super Boetium De trinitate*, question 5, article 3", *Recherches de théologie et philosophie médiévales* 67 (2000), 249–269. See also id., "Dieu, la théologie et la métaphysique au milieu du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle selon des textes épistémologiques artiens et thomasiens", *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 89 (2005), 261–294.

<sup>23</sup> The Plotinian theory of virtues as presented by Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium*

challenges the exhaustiveness of Aristotle's classification. Commentators answer with an interesting justification for Aristotle's classification.<sup>24</sup> They claim that moral virtues prevent us from falling into the distractions of the lower, material world, while intellectual virtues bring us through knowledge closer to the upper, immaterial world. The condition that makes this virtue duality possible resides in the structure of human soul that Masters find (through several textual transmissions) in Avicenna's two-faced soul theory. Among Masters of Arts, this doctrine plays the role of an anthropological justification for the Aristotelian division of moral (or customary, *consuetudinales*) and intellectual virtues. Moreover, this doctrine is closely related in the source texts to the Aristotelian ideal of contemplation. Therefore, the same justificatory source for Aristotle's virtue classification offers a Neo-Platonic (or Peripatetic) version of contemplation that finally fits with the sense of *Nicomachean Ethics*, book 10.

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*Scipionis* 1.8.4–10, ed. Jakob A. Willis (Leipzig, 1970), 37–39, was known throughout the Middle Ages; see, e.g., Huub van Lieshout, *La théorie plotinienne de la vertu: Essai sur la genèse d'un article de la Somme théologique de Saint Thomas* (Fribourg, 1926), esp. 123–155. Masters of Arts offer analogous solutions to the objection based upon Macrobius's classification. See *Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 154<sup>ra</sup>: “Primo dubitatur de ista diuisione uirtutis. Et uidetur quod sunt insufficientes: quia Macrobius diuidit uirtutes in uirtutes exemplares, et in uirtutes que sunt purgati animi, et in uirtutes purgatorias et in uirtutes politicas. Et appellat uirtutes politicas uirtutes consuetudinales. Cum ergo auctor non tangat hic nisi duas species uirtutis ut dictas, uidetur quod insufficienter diuidat uirtutem per intellectualem et consuetudinalem. Ad hoc dicendum est quod ista scientia intendit Aristoteles solum de uirtute humana et non de aliis uirtutibus que non sunt humane. Et ideo cum omnes ille uirtutes quas nominat Macrobius non sint humane. Ideo non omnes tangit hic. Virtutes enim exemplares sunt uirtutes quibus cognoscitur Primi essentia, et iste non sunt humane. Iterum uirtus que dicitur purgati animi non est humana: quia ista uirtus postquam anima separata est a corpore. Set uirtutes politice sunt humane et uirtus purgatoria est humana, quia uirtus purgatoria acceditur in comparatione intellectus uel rationis ad superiora sicut uirtus intellectualis quare illam non oportuit hic determinare quia apprehenditur sub uirtute intellectuali”; Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem*, F f. 35<sup>rb</sup>, O f. 30<sup>rb</sup>: “Ad ultimum dico quod Aristoteles non ponit hic diuisionem uirtutis nisi secundum quod inest anime unite corpori. Hec autem uirtus uel est consuetudinalis siue ciuilis uel purgatoria uel intellectualis. Virtus uero purgati animi est uirtus que quidem inest anime tantum post separationem anime a corpore. Virtus uero exemplaris est uirtus increata que est ipsam Primum. Et ideo de hiis duabus non facit hic mentionem. Non enim diuidit hic uirtutem uniuersaliter sed eam que est anime in coniuncto”.

<sup>24</sup> It seems to be quite common in thirteenth-century commentaries to justify the exhaustiveness of any classification in the commented text; cf. Sten Ebbesen, “The *Ars noua* in the *Ripoll Compendium*”, in *L'enseignement de la philosophie au XIIIe siècle: Autour du “Guide de l'étudiant” du ms. Ripoll 109*, ed. Claude Laffleur and Joanne Carrier (Turnhout, 1997), 345.

The two-faced soul theory has a long history of transmission all the way from Plotinus to the Middle Ages. The doctrinal transmission occurs by two principal means, one Greco-Arabic and the other Greco-Roman, the latter coming from Greek and Latin fathers of the Church. Here we focus on the first, most literal tradition, for the second is discussed elsewhere.<sup>25</sup>

Plato had initiated discussions of the soul's duality or ambiguity in his *Phaedo* and *Timaeus*. Only in his *Timaeus* is the soul described as a twofold entity; in the *Phaedo*, the ambiguity is due to the soul's position in a world of sensation.<sup>26</sup> In fact, the soul is a stranger to the sensible, given that it belongs to the intelligible world, a world of pure thought, where wisdom (*phronesis*) resides. Thus, the soul finds itself in an ambiguous situation, but it does not have duality in and of itself. Finally, in *Timaeus* 35a, the human soul is presented as possessing a duality in and of itself.

In the third century, Plotinus wrote what we call the founding text of the two-faced soul doctrine in *Enneads* 4.8.8, (or the sixth tractate in chronological order). This text merits some analysis:

For every soul possesses something which inclines downward to body, and something which tends upwards towards intellect: and the soul indeed, which is universal and of the universe, by its part which is inclined towards body, governs the whole without labour and fatigue, transcending that which it governs; because its operations do not subsist like ours, through the discursive energies of reason, but through intellect alone, in the same manner as art operates without deliberation and inquiry. Hence by her ultimate part she supervenes and adorns the whole. But souls which are particular and of a part, have also something supereminent; but they are too much occupied by sense, and by a perception of many things happening contrary to nature, and on every side producing anxiety and grief: and this because the object of their attention and care is a part indigent and defective, and surrounded with a

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<sup>25</sup> A more profound study of the whole process can be found in Valeria Buffon, "La théorie des deux faces de l'âme: Histoire de textes" (forthcoming).

<sup>26</sup> Plato, *Phaedo* 79cd, trans. George M.A. Grube (Indianapolis, 1977), 30: "We have also said some time ago that when the soul makes use of the body, be it hearing or seeing or some other sense—for to investigate something through the senses is to do it through the body—it is dragged by the body to the things that are never the same, and the soul itself strays and is confused and dizzy, as if it were drunk, in so far as it is in contact with that kind of thing.—Certainly.—But when the soul investigates by itself it passes into the realm of what is pure, ever existing, immortal and unchanging, and being akin to this, it always stays with it whenever it is by itself and can do so; it ceases to stray and remains in the same state as it is in touch with things of the same kind, and its experience then is what is called wisdom (*phronesis*)".

multitude of foreign concerns. It is likewise subject to a variety of affections, and is ensnared by the allurements of pleasure; but the superior part of the soul is never influenced by fraudulent delights, and lives a life always uniform and divine.<sup>27</sup>

When Plotinus explains the soul's descent into the body, he affirms that "every soul possesses something which inclines downward to body, and something which tends upwards towards intellect". This opinion, which considers every soul to be an intermediary which joins the upper, immaterial world with the lower, material world, is examined later by Proclus in the fifth century, but only for the World's Soul, not for individual (human) souls.<sup>28</sup>

The Arabic translation of Plotinus' fourth to sixth *Enneads*, made around 833–842 and known as the *Theology of Aristotle*,<sup>29</sup> introduces the theory into the tradition of Arabic Peripatetic philosophy.<sup>30</sup> The found-

<sup>27</sup> Plotinus, *Enneads* 4.8(6).8, in *Collected writings of Plotinus*, trans. Thomas Taylor (Frome, 1994), 143–144.

<sup>28</sup> Proclus Diadochus, *In Platonis Timaeum commentaria*, ed. Ernst Diehl (Leipzig, 1903–1906) 2: 130; *Commentary on the Timaeus of Plato*, trans. Thomas Taylor (Frome, 1998) 2: 556–557: "But it [the soul] is in one way the boundary of intelligibles, as presenting itself to the view after the intelligible hypostasis, and in another way the principle of sensibles as being exempt from, and motive of them. For thus it will afford us a certain analogy, and it will be as alter-motive are to self-motive natures, so are self-motive to immoveable natures. It will also possess the bond of beings through its proper middle condition, evolving indeed united causes, but collecting the dispersed powers of sensibles. And it will be comprehended indeed, by the essence which is immoveable, and always possesses an invariable sameness of subsistence, but will comprehend alter-motive, and all-variously mutable generation. *It is likewise intelligible, as with reference to generated natures, but generated as with reference to intelligibles; and thus exhibits the extremes in the middle; imitating in this respect the Goddess who is the cause of it. For she is on every side luminous, and has a face on every side. She likewise possesses the rudders of the universe, receiving in her bosoms the progressions of intelligibles into her; being filled from the intelligible life, but emitting the rivers of the intellectual life; and containing in herself the centre of the progression of all things.* Very properly therefore, is the soul both unbegotten and generated" (italics are Taylor's).

<sup>29</sup> For further information see Peter Adamson, *The Arabic Plotinus: A Philosophical Study of the Theology of Aristotle* (London, 2002); Cristiana d'Ancona, "Introduzione", in Plotinus, *La discesa dell'anima nei corpi (En. IV 8[6]): Plotiniana arabica: Pseudo-Teologia di Aristotele, capitoli 1 e 7 "detti del sapiente greco"*, ed. Cristiana d'Ancona (Padua, 2003), 9–111.

<sup>30</sup> The founding text of the *Enneads* in its Arabic translation—see Plotinus, *Aflūṭīn 'inda 'l-'Arab: Plotinus apud Arabes: Theologia Aristotelis et fragmenta quae supersunt*, ed. 'Abdu Rahman Badawī (Kuwait, 1977), p. 91—has several differences with the Greek original. Here we present Plotinus, *Enneads* 4.8.8, as translated from the Arabic version by Geoffrey Lewis in Plotinus, *Opera*, ed. Paul Henry et Hans-Rudolf Schwyzer (Paris–Brussels, 1951–1973) 2: 249–251 (the passages in Lewis's italics indicate the parts which remain unchanged from the original Greek): "*We say that every soul has something that is joined to the body below and is joined to the mind above. The universal soul controls the universal body, by a part of her faculties without fatigue or toil, because she does not control it by thought, as our souls*

ing text of the two-faced soul doctrine is then included in the corpus of Aristotelian philosophy. Moreover, considering that the *Theology* itself is already somehow ‘adapted’ to the Aristotelian system, it is comprehensible that its interpreters intend to make it coherent with the rest of the Aristotelian corpus. Among those interpreters we find Avicenna (980–1037), who comments on the *Theology of Aristotle*. Regarding the excerpt that interests us, he takes it to mean that every soul has two powers: (1) the material intellect and the intellect *in habitus*, by which the soul perceives its continuity with the intelligible world, and (2) “the practical intellect, i.e. internal and external senses,” by which the soul perceives its continuity with the sensible world.<sup>31</sup> This interpretation belongs to Avicenna’s commentary on the *Theology of Aristotle*; however, it becomes paradoxical in the context of Avicenna’s book *On the Soul* in his encyclopaedia *The Healing*, where he affirms that the human soul is completely immaterial.<sup>32</sup> This would contradict the identification of the practical intellect with internal and external senses, which depend upon corporeal organs. In *On the Soul* Avicenna simply notes this fact without actually resolving the problem; he states that the practical intellect is homonymously considered ‘intellect.’<sup>33</sup>

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*control our bodies*. She controls it without reflection because it is a universal body with no variance or dissimilar members, so as to need a varying control, but it is one body, connected, of similar members, and one nature with no variance in it. *The individual soul which is in these individual bodies is noble too*, controlling the bodies nobly, although she controls them only with fatigue and toil, for she controls them with thought and reflection. She reflects and thinks only because *sense-perception has made her busy with the study of sensible things, and pains and sorrows have been introduced into her by such of the things outside nature as have been brought to her*. This is what disturbs her and bemuses her and prevents her from casting her gaze on herself or on the part of herself that abides in the world of mind, because immediate concerns have dominated her, such as reprehensible desire and ignoble pleasure, so she rejects her eternal concerns in order to obtain by their rejection the pleasures of this world of sense, *not realising that she has removed herself from the pleasure that is true pleasure*, since she has chosen the transient pleasure with no permanence in it or constancy. *If the soul can reject sense and the transient sensory things and does not hold fast to them, she then controls this body with the slightest effort, with no fatigue or toil, and assimilates herself to the universal soul and becomes like her in conduct and control, with no difference or variation between them*”. For a new Greek-Arabic edition, see Plotinus, *La discesa dell’anima nei corpi*, 257–258.

<sup>31</sup> Avicenna, *Kitāb al-Insāf*, in *Aristū ‘inda ‘l-‘Arab*, ed. ‘Abdu Rahman Badawī (Cairo, 1947), 69. For a French translation, see “Notes d’Avicenne sur la *Théologie d’Aristote*”, ed. Georges Vajda, *Revue thomiste* 51 (1951), 399–400.

<sup>32</sup> Id., *De anima: Arabic Text: Being the Psychological Part of Kitāb al-shifā’* 1.1, ed. Fazlur Rahman (London–New York–Toronto, 1959), 1–16.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. 1.5, p. 45. See also Avicenna, *Liber de anima seu sextus de naturalibus* 1.5, ed. Simone van Riet (Leuven–Leiden, 1968–1972), 90: “Sed animae rationalis humanae

Then Avicenna presents his own version of the two-faced soul theory, which becomes highly influential in the Latin West:

Concerning the customs (*mores*) in us, they are not related to this virtue (*virtus*), unless because ⟨of the fact that⟩ *the human soul*, as you will know later, *is one substance having a relation to two ⟨things⟩, of which one is above the soul and the other below it*; but according to each of these ⟨things, the soul⟩ has different virtues that dispose the ‘habitus’ that is between the ⟨soul and what is above or below it⟩. On the one hand, the active virtue is that virtue which the soul has because of the duty (*debitum*) due to what is below it, i.e. the body, to govern it; but the contemplative virtue is that virtue which the soul has because of the duty (*debitum*) due to what is above it, in order to be affected by it, and to progress through it, and receive from it; *as if our soul had two faces, i.e. one face downwards towards the body*, this ⟨face⟩ must by no means receive any affection of the kind due to the nature of the body; *and another face upwards towards the highest principles*, this face must always receive something from that which is there and be affected by it. Now, customs (*mores*) are generated from what is below the ⟨soul⟩, but wisdoms are generated from what is above it; and this is the active virtue.<sup>34</sup>

The human soul is one substance, related to two things, one above it, another below it, as if it had two faces. Through an ‘active virtue’ the soul is related to the body, which it rules; through a ‘contemplative virtue’ the soul is related to superior things (the highest principles), from which it must receive as much as possible. Thus the two-faced soul theory gets a new sense coherent with this new background. Avicenna stresses the psychological aspects of the theory in his interpretation, whereas Plotinus showed a more global or metaphysical aspect, and Proclus highlighted a cosmological aspect.

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vires dividuntur in virtutem sciendi et virtutem agendi, et unaquaeque istarum virium vocatur intellectus aequivoce aut propter similitudinem”.

<sup>34</sup> Avicenna, *Liber de anima* 1.5, pp. 93–94: “Mores autem qui in nobis sunt non comparantur huic virtuti nisi quia *anima humana*, sicut postea scies, *est una substantia, habens comparisonem ad duo, quorum unum est supra eam et alterum infra eam*, sed secundum unumquodque istorum habet virtutem per quam ordinatur habitus qui est inter ipsam et illud. Haec autem virtus activa est illa virtus quam habet anima propter debitum quod debet ei quod est infra eam, scilicet corpus, ad regendum illud; sed virtus contemplativa est illa virtus quam habet anima propter debitum quod debet ei quod est supra eam, ut patiatu[r] ab eo et proficiat per illud et recipiat ex illo; *tamquam anima nostra habeat duas facies, faciem scilicet deorsum ad corpus*, quam oportet nullatenus recipere aliquam affectionem generis debiti naturae corporis, et *aliam faciem sursum, versus principia altissima*, quam oportet semper recipere aliquid ab eo quod est illic et affici ab illo. Ex eo autem quod est infra eam, generantur mores, sed ex eo quod est supra eam, generantur sapientiae; et haec est virtus activa” (italics are mine); cf. Avicenna, *De anima: Arabic Text* 1.5, p. 47.



The theory is reconsidered by Algazel (al-Ghazālī) in eleventh-century Baghdad, in a text that was translated into Latin during the twelfth century and known as the *Metaphysica*,<sup>35</sup> and by Gundissalinus in twelfth-century Spain.<sup>36</sup> Through these texts, the two-faced soul theory was transmitted to the Latin West.

In thirteenth-century Paris we find the two-faced soul theory included in the *Summa de bono* of Philip the Chancellor, who influenced early Latin commentaries on *Nicomachean Ethics*. Philip presents a slightly altered version of the theory. He states that the soul has two faces and that each of those faces is twofold, including a speculative or cognitive part as well as a practical or motive part.<sup>37</sup> This description of the soul's fourfold structure is employed by two Masters of Arts, the Commentator of Paris<sup>38</sup> and Pseudo-Peckham.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Algazel, *Metaphysica* 2.4.5, ed. Joseph T. Muckle, *Algazel's Metaphysics: A Medieval Translation* (Toronto, 1933), 172–173: “Anima uero humana habet duas facies, unam ad partem superiorem que est vastitas superior eo quod ab illa acquirit sciencias, nec habet anima virtutem speculativam nisi respectu illius partis cuius debitum erat ut semper reciperet; et aliam faciem ad partem inferiorem, scilicet ad regendum corpus, et virtutem activam non habet nisi propter hoc”. For the original Arabic see Ghazālī, *Maqāsid al-falāsifa*, ed. Sulayman Dunyā (Cairo, 1961), p. 359–360.

<sup>36</sup> Dominicus Gundissalinus, *De anima*, ed. Joseph T. Muckle, “The treatise *De anima* of Dominicus Gundissalinus”, *Mediaeval Studies* 2 (1940), 86–87 (with modifications): “Anima ergo rationalis cum sit una substantia habet comparationem ad duo, quorum unum est supra eam et alterum infra eam. Sed habet in se virtutes quibus coaptatur ad utrumque illorum, nam virtutem activam habet propter id quod debet ei quod est infra se, et virtutem contemplativam habet propter id quod est supra se videlicet ut patiarur ab eo et perficiatur per illud et recipiat ab illo. Quae duae vires sive duo intellectus sunt animae rationali quasi duae facies: una quae respiciat deorsum ad regendum suum inferius quod est corpus, quam nullo modo oportet recipere aliquam affectionem generis debiti naturae corporis; et aliam qua respiciat sursum ad contemplandum suum superius quod est Deus, quam oportet semper recipere aliquid ab illo quod est illic et affici ab illo. Sed ex eo quod est infra eam scilicet intellectu activo generantur mores et scientiae, et ex eo quod est supra eam, scilicet intellectu contemplativo acquiruntur sapientiae. Sed ad adquirenda haec unusquisque horum duorum intellectuum habet aptitudinem et perfectionem. Id enim quod solet aliquid recipere aliquando est receptibile eius in potentia, aliquando in effectum”.

<sup>37</sup> Philip the Chancellor, *Summa de bono*, ed. Nikolaus Wicki (Bern, 1985), 104: “Duplex est facies anime superior et inferior; et in utraque est tam cognitiva quam motiva, et tam in superiori quam in inferiori potest assignari aliquo modo trinitas, sed convenientius secundum superiorem que convertitur ad aeterna quam secundum inferiorem que convertitur ad mutabilia”.

<sup>38</sup> See below, n. 43.

<sup>39</sup> Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam novam et veterem*, F f. 68<sup>vb</sup>, O f. 48<sup>ra</sup>: “In anima rationali est duplex pars, inferior scilicet et superior: superior qua contemplatur superiora, inferior qua contemplatur et considerat inferiora. Cum ergo dicitur quod intellectus semper est rectus, hoc est quantum ad superiorem partem; non hoc modo

As for early commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics* in general, they include the soul's two faces theory in an ethical context, in order to interpret and justify the Aristotelian division between intellectual and moral virtues. Notably, at the beginning of the *Ethica vetus*, the distinction is between intellectual and customary virtues (*intellectuales et consuetudinales*),<sup>40</sup> while at the end of the *Ethica nova*, the distinction is between intellectual and moral virtues (*intellectuales et morales*).<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, as the *Ethica vetus* was the first text studied, its vocabulary seems to have been imposed upon the *Ethica nova*'s vocabulary.

With regard to the question about this classification, the *Commentary of Paris* on the *Ethica vetus* answers:

We must say that in the intellective part (of the soul) there is a right reason that flows from the First and this (intellective part) is the principle of both virtues and this (intellective part) is the same regarding substance. Intellect is related either to superior things or to inferior things and thus it is evident that customary and intellectual virtues are the same regarding substance.<sup>42</sup>

The commentator uses this two-faced soul theory as a valid explanation for the two kinds of virtue. There is one intellective substance related to inferior things and giving rise to customary virtues, as well as related to superior things and giving rise to intellectual virtues. Later on he explains this structure in detail. Each face contains a speculative part as well as a motive part. Thus the speculative, superior component,

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ratio est motor phantasie, sed solum quantum ad partem inferiorem est motor phantasie, et hoc modo non semper est rectus et propter hoc non procedit ratio. Aliter potest dici, sicut dicitur, quod intellectus agens cognoscat omnia, sed indistincte, cum autem illuminatur a phantasmatibus, tunc facit cognitionem distinctam in intellectu possibili; similiter dico quod, cum dicitur quod intellectus est semper rectus, hoc est prout indistincte se habet circa omnia, set tunc non mouet phantasiam; cum autem est circa singularia distincte se habens, tunc mouet phantasiam et tunc non est semper rectus; et propter hoc mouet quandoque recte, quandoque non recte". This is the twofold speculative intellect, as for the practical intellect it is divided according to intellectual and customary virtues; see n. 47 and 48.

<sup>40</sup> Aristotle, *Ethica nicomachea*, p. 5 (*Ethica vetus*): "Duplici autem virtute existente, hac quidem intellectuali, hac vero consuetudinali".

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., pp. 94–95 (*Ethica nova*): "Dicimus enim harum has quidem intellectuales, has autem morales, sapienciam, quidem et fronesim et intelligenciam intellectuales, liberalitaem autem et honestatem morales".

<sup>42</sup> *Lectura in Ethicam veterem*, f. 154<sup>rb</sup>: "Dicendum quod in parte intellectua est ratio recta influens a Primo et hec est principium utriusque uirtutis, et hec est eadem in substantia. Siue comparetur intellectus ad superiora siue ad inferiora et sic patet quod uirtus consuetudinalis et intellectualis sunt eodem secundum substantiam". The translation is mine.

the Agent intellect, receives illumination from the First, whereas the speculative, inferior component, the Possible intellect, is not completely illuminated because of its inclination towards imagination (*fantasia*). Similarly, the motive, superior part always acts correctly, while the motive, inferior part sometimes acts correctly but not always.<sup>43</sup>

The commentator of Avranches uses this same theory in arguing that the soul is ordained, or disposed, to good in a particular manner (the mention of disposition, *ordinatio*, to the good will recur in Masters' explanations). On the one hand, the soul is perfected by the First essence; on the other hand, this same soul perfects what is more imperfect, i.e., the body.<sup>44</sup> The commentator further elaborates on intellectual virtues, developing through them what we have called the ethical ideal

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., f. 153<sup>ra</sup>: “Et dicendum est ad hoc quod anima humana habet duplicem partem a parte speculativi intellectus, scilicet partem supremam que uocatur intellectus agens, et partem inferiorem et hec uocatur intellectus possibilis. Et intellectus agens plus recipit illuminationem a Primo quam possibilis. Similiter est a parte partis motiue: in motiua enim parte anime humane, que uocatur pars desideratiua, est duplex uirtus seu pars, scilicet suprema et inferior; et suprema pars plus illuminatur a Primo quam inferior pars. Et quia illa suprema pars maxime illuminatur a lumine Primi influente, ideo illa uirtus desideratiua quantum ad illam partem recte agit semper; quantum ad partem inferiorem, non tantum illuminatur a lumine Primi, et ideo potest ordinari ad recte et non recte operandum. Et hec est causa quare intellectus humanus non semper quantum ad quamlibet sui partem est rectus; set est in ipso possibilitas ad rectum et non rectum”. See also f. 153<sup>ra-rb</sup>: “Intellectus enim humanus deficit et quia pars inferior eius non omnino illuminatur a Primo et quia est inclinatus ad fantasiam. Et propter hoc potuit magis peccare quam intelligencia. Intelligencia autem non habet nisi unum defectum scilicet quantum ad partem eius inferiorem et non quia intellectus eius sit inclinatus ad fantasiam. Et ideo intelligencia non fit (fit *scr.*] *ficit MS.*) tantum coacta ad peccandum sicut homo”. A similar structure is described by Pseudo-Peckham, see above, n. 39.

<sup>44</sup> *Commentarium abrinense in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 90<sup>r-v</sup>: “Diuisio uirtutis humane per naturas (uel) differentias que sunt intellectualis et consuetudinalis. Natura anima nata est ordinari in bono, uel ab essentia a qua perficitur uidelicet Prima essentia uel etiam comparatione essentie quam nata est perficere. Est autem nata perfici ab essentia Prima, in qua comparatione habet uirtutem intellectualem eo quod non potest ei coniungi nisi per cognitionem et affectum, quorum unum est speculatiui intellectus, alterum uero actiui. Vnde uirtus predicta in cognitione et affectu consistit. Secundo uero reliqua comparatio quam habet ad corpus quod natum est perfici ab ea, erit uirtus consuetudinalis que alio nomine dicitur politica (*politica scr.*] *politica MS.*) dicitur enim consuetudinalis quia consuetudine formatur; politica uero quia per eam conueniens est hominem conuersari cum hominibus. De diuisione uero uirtutis intellectualis quia paucioris est diuisionis determinabitur in primo libro. Habet enim has III partes fronesis sapientiam intelligentiam (*intelligentiam scr.*] *intellectuam<sup>ac</sup> intellectiam<sup>bc</sup>*). Virtutis uero consuetudinalis est hic diuisio secundum huius doctrine, cum enim anima sit nata perficere corpus secundum uirtutes motiuas et uirtutes uero motiue sunt concupiscibilis, irascibilis (*irascibilis scr.*] *irationalis MS.*), rationalis”.

of Masters of Arts. In fact, intellectual virtues, exercised only by the intellect, consist of knowledge of and delight in the First. Coming from the speculative intellect, intellectual virtue begins with knowledge; it is perfected by delight, coming from the active or practical intellect.<sup>45</sup> Hence, in the *Commentarium abrinense in Ethicam ueterem*, the ethical ideal of Masters of Arts is closely linked to this theory of the soul. While the two-faced soul theory justifies Aristotle's division between customary and intellectual virtues, intellectual virtues are the achievement of the ethical ideal, such as knowledge or contemplation of superior things. Here we must highlight an important fact: not only in Plotinus but also in Avicenna and Algazel is this knowledge of superior things taken to be the result of the principal activity of the soul's superior part. These authors are then, in a certain manner, a source for the *Commentarium abrinense in Ethicam ueterem*. Moreover, the commentary treats both components of the ethical ideal as equal in 'strength': neither knowledge nor delight (or affection) is overemphasized.

Robert Kilwardby also includes in his commentary an explanation of the Aristotelian division of virtue with regard to order (*ordinare*). He claims that through intellectual virtues man is inclined, in a certain manner, towards his Creator, and that by moral virtues man is related to inferior things. Furthermore, intellectual virtues imply pure reason, while moral virtues imply this same reason related to faculties of sensation.<sup>46</sup> Besides the fact that the soul's two faces still serve as a justification for Aristotle's classification, a new, ethical dimension of the theory emerges. This application of the doctrine by Masters of Arts is an original development of their own. They explain an Aristotelian

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., f. 91<sup>r-v</sup>: "Virtus intellectualis est (est *scr.*] in *MS.*) uirtus secundum quam coniungitur anima superiori essentie a qua nata est perfici. Coniungitur autem superiori essentie per intellectum tantum contemplatione et affectu animi. Virtus intellectualis inchoatur a contemplatione et perficitur in affectu. Est enim in contemplatione summi boni cum (cum *scr.*] cuius *MS.*) dilectione eiusdem et quia sola operatione (operatione *scr.*] opositione *MS.*) ipsius intellectus quantum est de uirtute hominis perficitur, merito intellectualis nuncupatur. Reliqua uero dicitur consuetudinalis licet ab intellectu originem trahat eo quod per eam assuescunt potentie (potentie *scr.*] pone *MS.*) sensibiles ad debitam ordinationis rationis et ipsa perficitur in debita assuescentia rationis ad rectitudinem actuum. Ex causa ergo materiali que dicitur necessitas denominationem recipit".

<sup>46</sup> Robert Kilwardby, *Commentarii*, Cf. 295<sup>rb</sup>, Pr f. 11<sup>va</sup>: "Sic per uirtutes intellectuales intelliguntur uirtutes quibus homo ordinate se habet ad suum creatorem et hec consistunt circa partem principaliter et secundum se rationale absolute; per morales (intelliguntur uirtutes) que bene ordinant hominem ad hec inferiora et consistunt circa eandem partem rationalem in comparatione ad sensitiuam".

classification using a Peripatetic structure of the soul. This tendency is further developed during the thirteenth century for an increasing number of concepts and disciplines, which would eventually entail several undesired consequences for Masters of Arts.

Another commentator, known as Pseudo-Peckham, considers that the soul is ordained, or disposed directly (*immediate*) to the highest good through intellectual virtues, and that it is ordained, or disposed indirectly (*mediate*) to it through customary virtues.<sup>47</sup> In other words, intellectual virtues are attained through a right disposition (*ordinatio*) of man to his cause, while customary virtues are reached through a right disposition of man to fellow men.<sup>48</sup> Thus intellectual virtues consist of knowledge of and delight in the highest good (the First), while customary virtues consist of good behaviour regarding fellow men. The commentator also claims that moral virtues are those by which the soul rules the body.<sup>49</sup> In addition, Pseudo-Peckham's commentary arranges intellectual virtues, defined as knowledge of and delight in the First or the highest good, into a threefold hierarchy. Wisdom (*sapientia*) and intelligence (*intelligentia*) are preparatory stages for *fronesis*, the last and most perfect virtue (different from *prudentia*, which is considered a customary virtue).<sup>50</sup> Actually, wisdom consists of delightful knowledge of the

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<sup>47</sup> Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem*, F f. 35<sup>rb</sup>, O f. 30<sup>rb</sup>: "Per uirtutem ordinatur anima ad summum bonum. Sed ad summum non potest ordinari nisi dupliciter: aut immediate et per se, et sic uirtus intellectualis; aut mediate, et sic consuetudinalis. Et propter hoc sunt hee due differentie uirtutis".

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, F f. 35<sup>ra</sup>, O f. 30<sup>ra</sup>: "Differt uirtus consuetudinalis et intellectualis, quia uirtus intellectualis attenditur in recta ordinatione hominis ad suam causam, uirtus consuetudinalis attenditur in recta ordinatione hominis ad proximum. Vnde uirtus intellectualis consistit in cognitione et dilectione summi boni propter se, uirtus uero consuetudinalis in bene se habendo erga proximum".

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, F f. 33<sup>vb</sup>, O f. 29<sup>va</sup>: "uirtutes morales quibus anima bene ordinat corpus et bene ordinat erga proximum".

<sup>50</sup> For an explanation of *prudentia* as a customary virtue, see *ibid.*, F f. 35<sup>ra-rb</sup>, O f. 30<sup>ra</sup>: "uirtus intellectualis consistit in cognitione et dilectione summi boni propter se, uirtus uero consuetudinalis in bene se habendo erga proximum, quod patet discurrendo per differentias eius: temperantia enim dirigit hominem erga proximum quo ad operationes pertinentes ad concupiscentiam, similiter fortitudo quo ad operationes pertinentes ad irascibilem, *prudentia* uero et iustitia quo ad operationes pertinentes ad rationalem licet differenter sicut postea dicitur" (italics are mine). For a similar opinion, see Arnulf of Provence, *Divisio scientiarum*, p. 336: "Secundum uero partem qua ad corpus regendum inclinatur bene operando, acquirit anima habitus uirtutum: ut in regendo rationalem potentiam, prudentiam et iustitiam; in regendo irascibilem, fortitudinem; in gubernando concupiscibilem, temperantiam. Que sunt .III.<sup>or</sup> uirtutes cardinales que etiam consuetudinales dicuntur".

highest good, as its traces are found in inferior things,<sup>51</sup> and intelligence consists of delightful knowledge of intelligible things (*intelligibilia*).<sup>52</sup> The perfect balance between knowledge and delight in their highest degrees is *fronesis*: delightful knowledge of the highest good in intellectual creatures.<sup>53</sup> It is almost needless to say that this is precisely the ethical ideal that is described by Pseudo-Peckham as beatitude.<sup>54</sup> In this context, then, beatitude considered as delightful knowledge of the highest good becomes possible in this lifetime.

Finally, the two-faced soul theory is used to justify Aristotle's classification of intellectual and customary virtues in an introduction to philosophy, the *Divisio scientiarum* by Arnulf of Provence. He states that virtue is divided according to the different inclinations of the soul. The human intellect has two faces, one superior and one inferior. With the superior part, intellect has to various degrees an intuition of the Creator, along with great affection for Him, in each one of the intellectual virtues. The order of intellectual virtues is slightly different from that of Pseudo-Peckham: *intelligentia* is in the first level and *sapientia* in the second, but *fronesis* continues to crown the hierarchy. With the inferior part, that which inclines itself to rule the body, the soul acquires customary virtues.<sup>55</sup> Arnulf states both together: the ethical ideal of delightful knowledge (or knowledge and affection), and the two-faced

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<sup>51</sup> Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem*, F f. 33<sup>vb</sup>, O f. 29<sup>rb-va</sup>: "Si uero sapientia dicatur cognitio summi boni in inferioribus cum aliquo gustu participationis eius, [et] sic eius dilectio, sapientia erit nobilior uirtutibus moralibus, et secundum hunc modum uidebitur hic accipi". This reading is not exactly that of the manuscripts; I follow the version presented by Gauthier, "Arnoul de Provence", 151–152 with n. 53.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, F f. 33<sup>vb</sup>, O f. 29<sup>va</sup>: "Intelligentia eodem modo potest accipi dupliciter: uel pro habitu rerum intelligibilium, uel pro intelligibili affectione ex habitu intelligibilium procedente".

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, F f. 33<sup>vb</sup>, O f. 29<sup>va</sup>: "Fronesis uero est cognitio summi boni cum dilectione eius, prout potest (esse) cognitio summi boni et per intelligibiles creaturas in quibus maxime relucet eius ymago secundum quod possibile est in creaturis suis relucere".

<sup>54</sup> See above, n. 12.

<sup>55</sup> Arnulf of Provence, *Divisio scientiarum*, pp. 335–336: "Bonum autem quod est uirtus diuiditur secundum diuersum respectum anime quo inclinatur ad regendum corpus uel quo erigitur ad contemplandum Deum. Nam intellectus humani duplex ponitur facies, superior scilicet et inferior, secundum quam diuersos habitus uirtutum sibi acquirit. Nam secundum quod per partem superiorem intuetur Creatorem absque multa et magna affectione, informatur habitu uirtutis qui dicitur intelligentia; secundum uero quod ulterius per affectionem extenditur et affectus intenditur, informatur secundo habitu uirtutis qui dicitur sapientia, quasi *saporem condita*; secundum autem quod per intensum affectum et amorem inflammatur ut Illi, quantum possibile est, se conformet, acquiritur ei habitus uirtutis qui dicitur fronesis, id est 'informatio'. Et isti tres habitus anime uocantur uirtutes intellectuales. Secundum uero partem qua ad cor-

soul theory. This theory is also found in other texts of Masters of Arts, as in the *Compendium examinatorium parisiense*, where intellectual virtues are possible by means of admiration of forms inhering in the First, as well as by contemplation of Him, while customary virtues are possible through the domination of inferior powers and fleshly movements.<sup>56</sup>

Among Masters of Arts, intellectual virtues are considered to be a means of access to knowledge or contemplation of separated superior things, such as the highest good (God, the First). This concern about the possibility of knowing God recurs in various commentaries and other works of Parisian Masters of Arts of the same period. Delightful knowledge of the highest good as a product of exercising intellectual virtues is the ethical ideal of Masters of Arts, an ideal which leads them to discuss numerous theological and metaphysical subjects,<sup>57</sup> as well as to inquire into a number of fundamental problems of the early scholastics, such as the structure of the soul.

In conclusion, commentators on the *Ethica nova* and *vetus*, as well as some other Masters of Arts from 1230 to 1250, justify the Aristotelian division between intellectual and customary virtues through a psychological framework provided by the two-faced soul theory. This doctrine was founded by Plotinus as metaphysical, then adapted by Avicenna to a psychological context. Masters of Arts apply the doctrine in an ethical context, actualizing another aspect of the theory, and at the same time originating new theoretical developments of their own. This application of the theory not only implies an anthropological concept belonging to Masters of Arts, but also leads, through intellectual virtues, to delightful knowledge of the First, the ethical ideal of contemplation that inspired Parisian philosophers throughout the thirteenth century.

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pus regendum inclinatur bene operando, acquirit anima habitus uirtutum... Que sunt .iiii.<sup>or</sup> uirtutes cardinales que etiam consuetudinales dicuntur”.

<sup>56</sup> *Compendium examinatorium parisiense* 79, p. 55: “Et notandum quod uirtus intellectualis est per admirationem formarum a Primo et Eius contemplationem; consuetudinalis uero per asseruationem et dominationem potentiarum inferiorum uel motuum carnalium”.

<sup>57</sup> Parisian Masters of the early thirteenth century are perhaps the ultimate source of one of the articles condemned in 1277, see *La condamnation parisienne de 1277*, ed. David Piché (Paris, 1999), 126: “Quod homo ordinatus quantum ad intellectum et affectum, sicut potest sufficienter esse per uirtutes intellectuales et alias morales de quibus loquitur philosophus in ethicis, est sufficienter dispositus ad felicitatem eternam”.

MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL VIRTUES IN  
THE EARLIEST LATIN COMMENTARIES  
ON THE *NICOMACHEAN ETHICS*

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“Sed quoniam res humanae fragiles  
caducaeque sunt, semper aliqui anquirendi  
sunt, quos diligamus et a quibus diligamur;  
caritate enim benevolentiaque sublata  
omnis est e vita sublata iucunditas”.

(Cicero, *Laelius de amicitia* 27.102)

The principal characteristic of commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics* written in the first half of the thirteenth century is that they discuss only the first three books of the text, i.e., the *Ethica nova* and the *Ethica vetus*.<sup>1</sup> Fernand Bossier's recent studies have clarified the initial stage of the reception of the *Nicomachean Ethics* in the Latin West and ascribed the first two Latin translations to Burgundio of Pisa. Both were written before 1150, yet the translation of the *vetus* decidedly preceded that of the *nova*.<sup>2</sup>

The statute of the Faculty of Arts at Paris, issued by Robert of Courçon in 1215, put *ethica* among the optional disciplines on which the masters could lecture on holidays.<sup>3</sup> As David Luscombe observes, this provision brought the *Nicomachean Ethics* to the attention of the Arts Masters. At the same time, it compelled Parisian theologians to

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<sup>1</sup> The *Ethica nova* and *Ethica vetus* are edited in Aristotle, *Ethica nicomachea*, ed. René-Antoine Gauthier (Leiden–Brussels, 1972–1974).

<sup>2</sup> Fernand Bossier, “L’élaboration du vocabulaire philosophique chez Burgundio de Pise”, in *Aux origines du lexique philosophique européen: L’influence de la “Latinitas”*, ed. Jacqueline Hamesse (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1997), 81–102.

<sup>3</sup> *Chartularium universitatis parisiensis*, ed. Henri Denifle and Émile Châtelain (Paris, 1889–1894) 1:78 n. 20; Claude Lafleur, “Transformations et permanences dans le programme des études à la Faculté des arts de l’Université de Paris au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle: Le témoignage des ‘introductions à la philosophie’ et des ‘guides de l’étudiant’”, in *Laval théologique et philosophique* 54 (1998), 402, 407.



occupy themselves with the *Nicomachean Ethics*, unlike late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century theologians, who showed little interest in this Aristotelian text.<sup>4</sup> The teaching and interpretation of the partial text of the *Nicomachean Ethics* by the Arts Masters survives in five commentaries written before 1250.

Investigations of these early commentaries have clearly shown that the *magistri artium* interpreted Aristotle's doctrine in the light of Christian moral thought and its conceptual categories as developed in the neighbouring faculty of theology and hence difficult to ignore.<sup>5</sup> Their universe of thought is that of Augustine, partly contaminated by Avicenna and Arab Neo-Platonic thought<sup>6</sup> as well as by Stoicism, which, incorporated into patristic thought, goes on wielding influence all through the Middle Ages.<sup>7</sup> For these reasons, and because of their incomplete knowledge of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the Arts Masters sometimes came to distort Aristotle's thought. For example, instead of interpreting happiness as the highest intellectual realization of the human being, they identified it with God.<sup>8</sup> This concept of transcendent and

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<sup>4</sup> David Luscombe, "Ethics in the Early Thirteenth Century", in *Albertus Magnus und die Anfänge der Aristoteles-Rezeption im lateinischen Mittelalter: Von Richardus Rufus bis zu Franciscus de Mayronis*, ed. Ludger Honnefelder, Rega Wood, Mechthild Dreyer, and Marc-Aeilko Aris (Münster, 2005), 662–668.

<sup>5</sup> Odon Lotin, *Psychologie et morale aux XIIIe et XIIIe siècles* (Louvain–Gembloux, 1942–1960) 1: 505–534; René-Antoine Gauthier, "Le cours sur l'*Ethica noua* d'un maître ès arts de Paris (vers 1235–1240)", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 50 (1975), 71–93; Georg Wieland, *Ethica-scientia practica: Die Anfänge der philosophischen Ethik im 13. Jahrhundert* (Münster, 1981), 130–197, 221–307; id., "L'émergence de l'éthique philosophique au XIIIe siècle", in *L'enseignement de la philosophie au XIIIe siècle: Autour du "Guide de l'étudiant" du ms. Ripoll 109*, ed. Claude Lafleur and Joanne Carrier (Turnhout, 1997), 167–180; Anthony J. Celano, "The 'finis hominis' in the Thirteenth Century Commentaries on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 58 (1986), 23–31; id., "Act of the Intellect or Act of the Will: The Critical Reception of Aristotle's Ideal of Human Perfection in the 13th and Early 14th Century", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 65 (1990), 95–98.

<sup>6</sup> For the characteristics of this Greco-Arab peripateticism see Claude Lafleur, "L'enseignement philosophique à la Faculté des Arts de l'Université de Paris en la première moitié du XIIIe siècle dans le miroir des textes didascaliques", *Laval théologique et philosophique* 60 (2004), 409–448.

<sup>7</sup> See e.g. Mary E. Ingham, "*Phronesis* and *Prudentia*: Investigating the Stoic Legacy of Moral Wisdom and the Reception of Aristotle's *Ethics*", in *Albertus Magnus und die Anfänge*, 631–656.

<sup>8</sup> Wieland, *Ethica-scientia practica*, 143–197; Anthony J. Celano, "The Understanding of the Concept of *felicitas* in the pre-1250 Commentaries on the *Ethica nicomachea*", *Medioevo* 12 (1986), 29–53; Valeria Buffon, "Sobre el concepto de *felicitas* de la *Ethica noua* en el comentario de Paris, ms. 3804A (1235–1240)", *Patristica et mediaevalia* 23 (2002),

subsistent happiness is the keystone of the interpretation given by the *magistri* not only to the *Ethica nova* but also to the *Ethica vetus*, for it influences their account of the virtues.

Defining happiness as ‘union with God’ or ‘knowledge and love of God’ means placing man’s ultimate end in God. In such a way the perfection necessary in order to be happy becomes much more difficult to attain than that established by Aristotle, according to whom happiness is produced by the actions of man, by *bene vivere* and *bene agere*. The distance which separates man from the source of his happiness is so great that commentators often admit the need for God’s grace for the beatifying union to be realized. Contrary to Aristotle’s ethics, human virtues function as a means by which the soul is disposed to union with God. This doctrine results from a metaphysical conception of happiness, from which the commentators derive an ‘ascetic’ morality that assigns the most important role to intellectual virtues and determines a misinterpretation of *phronesis*.

In the present study I shall outline the role assigned by the Arts Masters to the moral (*consuetudinales*) and intellectual virtues, investigating both the adherence of the masters to Aristotle’s thought and the affinity of their positions with theological thought. For this purpose I will examine the general exposition of these two main classes of virtues in their commentaries on *Nicomachean Ethics* 2.1–2, where Aristotle explains why virtue is twofold and discusses the characteristics of moral virtues, and on *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.13, where he lists the three intellectual virtues. As we shall see, whole system of virtues is directed towards the attainment of happiness, which consists in the affective knowledge of God, almost a mystical union with the divine. Moral virtues perfect man by making him fit for this union, while intellectual virtues produce it. The consequence of this ‘teleological’ formulation is the Masters’ lack of interest in practical wisdom<sup>9</sup> and the ‘social’ dimension of Aristotle’s ethics.

My analysis is based on the four, mostly fragmentary, commentaries on the *Ethica vetus* that have been handed down to us: the *Commentarium*

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102–107; ead., “Happiness and Knowledge in Some Masters of Arts before 1250: An Analysis of Some Commentaries on the Book I of *Nicomachean Ethics*”, *Patristica et mediaevalia* 25 (2004), 111–115.

<sup>9</sup> On the meaning of *phronesis* in these early commentaries see Anthony J. Celano, “The End of Practical Wisdom: Ethics as Science in the Thirteenth Century”, *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 33 (1995), 225–235.

*abrincense* in *Ethicam ueterem*,<sup>10</sup> the *Commentary of Paris*,<sup>11</sup> the commentary of Pseudo-Peckham,<sup>12</sup> and the commentary of Robert Kilwardby.<sup>13</sup> The exposition of the final part of the *Ethica nova* has been preserved only in Pseudo-Peckham's and Kilwardby's commentaries.<sup>14</sup>

*Theologians and philosophers on the virtues*

I would like to make some preliminary remarks about the difference between infused virtues and acquired virtues, a distinction important for understanding not only the cultural horizon of the Arts Masters but also their approach to the Aristotelian account of the virtues. Although not systematically treated, such a distinction emerges rather frequently in these commentaries, revealing that the *magistri* had a good knowledge of current theological doctrine and wanted to integrate it into their *lectiones*. Nevertheless, they kept it distinct from Aristotle's teachings and compared the two points of view: *secundum theologos* and *secundum philosophos*.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>10</sup> MS Avranches, BM 232 (= A), ff. 90<sup>r</sup>–123<sup>f</sup>. This is the oldest commentary concerning the *Ethica vetus* alone (*Nicomachean Ethics* 2–3.11).

<sup>11</sup> For the edition of the fragment on the *Ethica nova* (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1.3–6), see *Lectura in Ethicam nouam*, ed. Gauthier, “Le cours”, 94–141. I am preparing an edition of the fragment on the *Ethica vetus* (*Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*, MSS Paris, BnF lat. 3804A, ff. 152<sup>ra</sup>–159<sup>vb</sup>, 241<sup>ra</sup>–247<sup>vb</sup>; lat. 3572, ff. 226<sup>ra</sup>–235<sup>ra</sup>); the quotations in this essay are the fruit of a first, provisional transcription.

<sup>12</sup> Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem*, MSS Florence, BN Conv. soppr. G.4.853 (= F), ff. 1<sup>ra</sup>–77<sup>va</sup>; Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. misc. c. 71 (= O), ff. 2<sup>ra</sup>–52<sup>rb</sup>; Prague, NK III.F.10 (= Pr), ff. 12<sup>ra</sup>–23<sup>va</sup> (fragmentary); A, ff. 123<sup>r</sup>–125<sup>v</sup> (fragmentary). This is a complete commentary on the *Ethica nova* and *vetus*. An edition of the text is being prepared by Valeria Buffon, to whom I wish to express my warmest thanks for allowing me to quote passages from her provisional transcription.

<sup>13</sup> Robert Kilwardby, *Commentarii supra libros Ethicorum*, ed. Anthony J. Celano (forthcoming). The commentary expounds both the *Ethica nova* and *vetus* and is contained in MSS Cambridge, Peterhouse 206 (= C), ff. 285<sup>ra</sup>–307<sup>vb</sup> and Pr, ff. 1<sup>ra</sup>–11<sup>vb</sup> (fragmentary). I am deeply grateful to Anthony J. Celano for kindly putting at my disposal the text of his edition.

<sup>14</sup> I do not consider here the *Scriptum super librum Ethicorum*, ed. Martin J. Tracey, “An Early 13th-Century Commentary on Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* I, 4–10: The *Lectio cum questionibus* of an Arts-Master at Paris in MS Napoli, Biblioteca Nazionale, VIII G 8, ff. 4<sup>r</sup>–9<sup>vs</sup>”, *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 17 (2006), 23–69, because it lacks the exposition of the final part of the first book. In addition, Wieland, *Ethica-scientia practica*, 48, notes the fragment of one more commentary on the *Ethica vetus* in MS Paris, BnF lat. 3572, ff. 186<sup>ra</sup>–187<sup>vb</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> On the distinction between these perspectives see Valeria Buffon, “Philosophers

In approaching the problem of man's capacity to do good, the author of the *Commentary of Paris* claims that, according to the theologians, man is only the source of evil, not of good.<sup>16</sup> In order to act rightly, it is necessary that the "First Intelligence" infuse *recta ratio* into our intellect.<sup>17</sup> Right reason, the criterion of reasonableness by which man chooses to act for a useful and right end, is accordingly removed from the responsibility of man, and the credit for every good action is traced back to God's goodness. Therefore, according to theologians, the infused *habitus* precedes every good action, while in the opinion of philosophers the *habitus* arises from good actions produced by the will of man.<sup>18</sup> Pseudo-Peckham states that, according to Aristotle, virtue is the "human good" which man acquires through right actions, while according to theologians it is the grace of God which informs every good human action—so much so that virtue does not depend on us but, as St. Paul says in Phil. 2:13, "it is God who works in you both to will and to work".<sup>19</sup> According to the commentator of Avranches, the infused virtues are *virtutes divinae* produced by the infusion of the good,

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and Theologians on Happiness: An Analysis of Early Latin Commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics*", *Laval théologique et philosophique* 60 (2004), 449–476; Irene Zavattero, "Felicità e Principio Primo: Teologia e filosofia nei primi commenti latini all'*Ethica nicomachea*", *Rivista di storia della filosofia* 61 (2006), 109–136.

<sup>16</sup> For a comparison between theologians and philosophers on this subject similar to that established by the *Commentary of Paris*, see *Compendium examinatorium parisiense* 119, ed. Claude Lafleur and Joanne Carrier, *Le "Guide de l'étudiant" d'un maître anonyme de la Faculté des arts de Paris au XIIIe siècle: Édition critique provisoire du ms. Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, Ripoll 109, fol. 134<sup>a</sup>–158<sup>va</sup>* (Québec, 1992), 66.

<sup>17</sup> *Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*, ff. 154<sup>vb</sup>–155<sup>ra</sup>: "loquendo theologice oportet dicere quod habitus bonus de necessitate praecedat omnem operationem bonam, quia ratio recta est data a Prima Intelligentia ut illuminet intellectum humanum; quae quidem ratio recta est fundamentum cuiuslibet operationis bonae; et hoc est quod dicunt theologi quod bonum est infusum a Deo dirigente bene operamur"; f. 155<sup>rb</sup>: "nos sumus omnino principium mali; sed nos non sumus omnino principium boni; immo, sicut dictum est prius, bonitas datur nobis a primo qui illuminat intellectum nostrum, et postea facimus bonum".

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 155<sup>ra</sup>: "secundum philosophos... nos sumus principium virtutis tantum; unde voluntas quae est in nobis existens et determinata est causa operationis; quae operatio causat virtutem; et secundum istum modum dicendum est quod operationes de necessitate antecedunt et nullus habitus antecedit operationes in moralibus".

<sup>19</sup> Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem* Prol., F f. 1<sup>ra</sup>, O f. 2<sup>ra</sup>: "Bonum... humanum, id est ab homine per rectas operationes cum delectatione et tristitia et cum perseverantia in hiis acquisitum, quod est uirtus. Non enim sic ponit Philosophus uirtutem in nobis a divina providentia sicut ponit felicitatem, licet forte secundum theologum et secundum veritatem uirtus non sit a nobis sed a prima causa secundum illud: 'Deus operatur in nobis velle et perficere'".

which first affects the faculty of acting and then influences the action produced. The reverse happens with human virtues: the good action transmits rectitude to the faculty which produces it.<sup>20</sup>

The distinction between infused and acquired virtue also appears in the discussion about the acquisition of virtue, where the *magistri* consider whether a single act is sufficient for a virtuous *habitus*. As we will see, many actions are needed in order to acquire the moral virtues, while a single act is sufficient to prepare the soul for the infusion of the *habitus* by the grace of God.<sup>21</sup>

The Arts Masters seem to feel the need to report the thought of theologians when Aristotle's thought more markedly departs from it. Nevertheless they state repeatedly that the expounded view is the philosophical rather than the theological one ("loquor secundum philosophum";<sup>22</sup> "hic non debemus soluere quemadmodum theologi, sed secundum intentionem philosophi").<sup>23</sup> As philosophers, they could only consider the virtues as naturally acquired qualities; they usually called the moral virtues *consuetudinales*, since they resulted from repeated action. Theologians, in contrast, insisted that perfect virtue requires charity and grace. Around 1250 most theologians taught that grace could elevate the naturally acquired virtues to a supernatural level; moreover, all of them believed that even the moral virtues could be directly infused by grace. Odo Rigaldi, for instance, discussed the cardinal virtues as infused *habitus*, in accordance with the *sancti et theologi*, rather than as the products of moral action, as maintained by the *philosophi*.

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<sup>20</sup> *Commentarium abrinense in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 92<sup>r</sup>: "Differt in his uirtutibus [consuetudinalibus] et uirtutibus diuinis que sunt per infusionem. In illis enim uirtutes precedunt actus formatos ab illa uirtute: infusio enim boni primo fit super potentiam et influit super actum. Aliter est autem in his uirtutibus quarum homo est principium; primo enim super actum bonum et ex hoc in ipsa potentia coniuncta actui; bonitas enim potentiae communis est et bonis et malis, sed bonitas actus interioris et exterioris differt in eis".

<sup>21</sup> Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem* 24 q. 4, F f. 39<sup>rb</sup>, O f. 32<sup>va</sup>: "una bona operatio loquendo secundum theologos et secundum ueritatem, qui non dicunt operationem bonam nisi informatam gratia ratione gratie informantis, sufficit ad habitum bonum. Per quam cum homo preparat se, Deus infundit gratiam et proficit et consummat in eo bonum ad quod se preparauit... Secundum uero philosophos non sic est, immo aliter, quod secundum eos numquam una operatio bona sufficit ad habitum et maxime ad habitum siue ad uirtutem consuetudinalem... Ideo non sufficit una operatio sed requiruntur multe et etiam hoc notatur ex hoc nomine consuetudinale".

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* lect. 12 q. 2, F f. 20<sup>rb</sup>, O f. 17<sup>ra</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> *Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 243<sup>ra</sup>.

From his point of view, moral action was the result rather than the cause of virtue.<sup>24</sup>

The commentary of Kilwardby, which does not introduce the comparison with the theological position, states that “in us is first the act of virtue and then the *habitus*”.<sup>25</sup> The author shows in this place and, generally, in all his expositions, his intention to comment on the *littera* of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, which he knows more precisely than the other commentators. He postpones discussion of the priority of *habitus* over *actus* to his commentary on Peter Lombard’s *Sententiae*.<sup>26</sup> As we will see, Kilwardby often diverges from the other commentators and from the theologians. For example, in discussing right reason, he criticizes those who define it as “a goodness or potency of the soul infused by God, through which the inferior faculties are persuaded to do good and to refrain from evil”.<sup>27</sup> Kilwardby explains that right reason is treated by Aristotle in the third book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* and that it coincides with *proheresis*, that is to say, with the *intentio bona in operando*.<sup>28</sup>

### *The twofold nature of virtue*

In commenting on the beginning of the *Ethica vetus*, “duplici autem virtute existente” (*Nicomachean Ethics* 2.1, 1103a15), the author of the *Commentary of Paris* argues that intellectual virtue and moral virtue form a twofold virtue in that they trace back to the same origin, which resides in the intellective part of the soul.<sup>29</sup> Kilwardby shares this interpretation and explains the term *duplex* as a “*dualitas*” rooted in the same subject,

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<sup>24</sup> See the citation in Lottin, *Psychologie et morale* 3: 184 n. 3: “[philosophi] uocabant etiam eas consuetudinales, a consuetudine bene operandi. Sed in hiis non concordant sancti et theologi philosophis, quia non dicunt ex actibus relinqui [*codd.* delinqui] habitus uirtutum sicut dicebant philosophi; immo dicunt habitus uirtutum esse ex infusione et ex eis elici actus”.

<sup>25</sup> Robert Kilwardby, *Commentarii* 2 lect. 1, Cf. 295<sup>va</sup>: “actus uirtutis prior nobis inest et habitus posterior”.

<sup>26</sup> Id., *Quaestiones in librum tertium Sententiarum* II q. 26, ed. Gerhard Leibold (Munich, 1985), 89–97.

<sup>27</sup> Id., *Commentarii supra libros Ethicorum* 2 lect. 1, Cf. 296<sup>ra</sup>: “quidam istud, dicentes quod recta ratio sit bonitas sive potencia anime a deo infusa per quam intellectam suadet inferiores uirtutes ad bonum et co[h]erect a malo”.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.: “potest dici quod recta ratio sit idem quod proheresis de qua determinat vel in tercio, vel quod fit intencio bona in operando que forte non est aliud a proheresi”.

<sup>29</sup> *Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*, ff. 153<sup>vb</sup>–154<sup>ra</sup>: “Virtus intellectualis et consuetudinalis non sunt diversae omnino; quia ab eodem sunt sicut ab origine et radice, sicut a

which is the human intellect.<sup>30</sup> Pseudo-Peckham maintains that they are situated in the intellective part of the soul “sicut in subiecto”.<sup>31</sup>

Broadly speaking, our *magistri* believe that what distinguishes the two virtues is their orientation: intellectual virtue is oriented towards the superior world of the intelligible, moral virtue towards the inferior world of corporeality.<sup>32</sup> The *Commentary of Paris* explains this distinction more clearly: the two virtues differ with regard to both their object and their end. The object of intellectual virtue is the First Cause and its end is the love for it, while the object and the end of moral virtue are neither the First Cause nor the love for it, but rather things of the body (*res inferior*) and the love for them. The author admits that, in his opinion (*quod bene credo*), the two virtues are not identical in their substance. Nevertheless, he observes, in the intellective faculty there is *recta ratio* effused by the First Principle: it is the principle of both virtues and remains the same whether the intellect is directed *ad superiora* or *ad inferiora*. Consequently, moral and intellectual virtue are identical in their substance but conceptually different.<sup>33</sup> In this passage the infusion of the *recta ratio* is not explicitly ascribed to the opinion of the theologians, and the master replaces the verb *infundere* with *influere*, a

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parte intellectiva; pars enim intellectus comparari ad superiora et potest comparari ad inferiora sicut ad corpus, cuius est perfectio”.

<sup>30</sup> Robert Kilwardby, *Commentarii* 2 lect. 1, Cf. 295<sup>va</sup>: “Intellige quod duplici et non ‘duabus’, et hac ratione: quia duo sunt qui differunt secundum subiectum et ponunt in numerum secundum subiectum; duplex autem est dualitas in uno subiecto radicata. Sic autem est de virtute consuetudinali et intellectuali. Eiusdem enim subiecti secundum substantiam sunt perfectiones, sicut intellectus humani, et respiciendo hoc subiectum possunt dici duplex”.

<sup>31</sup> Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem* 22 q. 3, F f. 35<sup>va</sup>, O f. 30<sup>rb</sup>: “omnis uirtus siue intellectualis siue consuetudinalis est in parte intellectiua sicut in subiecto”.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, F f. 35<sup>ra</sup>, O f. 30<sup>ra</sup>: “uirtus intellectualis attenditur in recta ordinatione hominis ad suam causam, uirtus consuetudinalis attenditur in recta ordinatione hominis ad proximum”; *Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 153<sup>vb</sup>: “Virtus intellectualis attenditur in comparatione ad superiora, quia huiusmodi uirtus est in contemplatione Primi et dilectione eiusdem, consuetudinalis autem est in comparatione ad inferiora”.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 154<sup>rb</sup>: “dilectio Primi est obiectum intellectualis et finis. Sed finis consuetudinalis non est prima causa, nec eius obiectum ut amor ipsius, immo amor rei inferioris, et sic patet quod consuetudinalis et intellectualis non sunt eadem uirtus secundum substantiam, quod bene credo. Sed si dicatur quod sunt eadem secundum substantiam, dicendum quod in parte intellectiva est ratio recta influens a Primo, et haec est principium utriusque uirtutis; et haec est eadem in substantia sive comparetur intellectus ad superiora sive ad inferiora; et sic patet quod uirtus consuetudinalis et intellectualis sunt eadem secundum substantiam”; f. 154<sup>ra</sup>: “differens non secundum substantiam sed secundum rationem”.

technical term used in the *Liber de causis* to denote the productive action by which the First Cause disseminates its goodness to creatures and remains in all its effects.<sup>34</sup> Therefore, *recta ratio* seems to mean the ‘trace of the divine in us’ resulting from the emanation of the First Cause rather than the free gift of God. What is important, however, is that the master seems inclined to stress the substantial unity of the rational soul, the root of the two virtues, to prevent the double orientation of the intellect from creating a division of the soul’s substance. In this sense the substantial identity of the two virtues seems to safeguard the indivisibility of the soul, a doctrine of fundamental importance for theologians of the first half of the thirteenth century.<sup>35</sup> Originating in the Augustinian tradition, the doctrine was adopted by the earliest Latin commentators (1240–1260) on *De anima*.<sup>36</sup>

The *Commentary of Paris* totally agrees with Avicenna’s doctrine of the substantiality of the rational soul and its double orientation ‘upwards’ and ‘downwards’—the doctrine of the ‘two faces’ of the soul formulated by Avicenna<sup>37</sup> and continued by Algazel<sup>38</sup> and Gundissalinus.<sup>39</sup> This theory, combining with Augustine’s doctrine of the *ratio superior* and the *ratio inferior*,<sup>40</sup> became widespread in the Latin West among the theologians of the first half of the thirteenth century.<sup>41</sup> Although not

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<sup>34</sup> *Liber de causis* 19 (20), ed. Adriaan A.J. Pattin, *Tijdschrift voor filosofie* 28 (1966), 177–180. The term *influer* occurs also in other passages in connection with the theory of the Augustinian illumination, as in *Lectura in Ethicam nouam*, pp. 116–117.

<sup>35</sup> Richard C. Dales, *The Problem of the Rational Soul in the Thirteenth Century* (Leiden, 1985), 13–46.

<sup>36</sup> As representatives of the so-called ‘first Averroism’, these *magistri* ascribe the whole intellective faculty to the single knowing individual. Moreover, some of them maintain the substantial identity of the agent intellect and the possible intellect, which are only conceptually distinguished; e.g., William of Clifford, *Super de anima*, MS Cambridge, Peterhouse 157, ff. 129<sup>vb</sup>: “idem sint in substantia, differens tantum secundum rationem”. Cf. René-Antoine Gauthier, “Notes sur les débuts (1225–1240) du premier ‘averroïsme’”, *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 66 (1982), 335; Paola Bernardini, “La dottrina dell’anima separata nella prima metà del XIII secolo e i suoi influssi sulla teoria della conoscenza (1240–1260 ca.)”, in *Etica e conoscenza nel XIII e XIV secolo*, ed. Irene Zavattero (Arezzo, 2006), 27–37.

<sup>37</sup> Avicenna, *Liber de anima seu sextus de naturalibus* 1.5, ed. Simone van Riet (Leuven–Leiden, 1968–1972), 93–94.

<sup>38</sup> Algazel, *Metaphysica* 2.4.5, ed. Joseph T. Muckle, *Algazel’s Metaphysics: A Medieval Translation* (Toronto, 1933), 172–173.

<sup>39</sup> Dominicus Gundissalinus, *De anima*, ed. Joseph T. Muckle, “The treatise *De anima* of Dominicus Gundissalinus”, *Mediaeval Studies* 2 (1940), 86.

<sup>40</sup> Augustine, *De trinitate* 12.3.3, ed. W.J. Mountain and F. Glorie, CSEL 50: 357–358.

<sup>41</sup> Jean Rohmer, “Sur la doctrine franciscaine des deux faces de l’âme”, *Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 2 (1927), 73–77; Robert W. Mulligan, “*Ratio*



expressly mentioning the *facies*, our commentators distinguish between the intellectual and moral virtues on the basis of the double orientation of the soul (contemplative and active), which roughly corresponds to the Aristotelian distinction between speculative and practical intellect (*De anima* 3.10, 433a14–15).<sup>42</sup> Showing considerable interest in matters of moral psychology, the *Commentary of Paris* complicates this scheme, perhaps by following the thought of Philip the Chancellor, who sees in each of the two *facies* both a cognitive and a practical role.<sup>43</sup> The author of the commentary divides both the *pars intellectiva* (speculative intellect) and the *pars desiderativa* (practical intellect) according to the double orientation of the soul *ad superiora* and *ad inferiora*. It follows that the superior part of the intellective faculty is the agent intellect, which produces an ‘indistinct’ knowledge and is always right, while the inferior part is the possible intellect, which is not always right.<sup>44</sup> To each part corresponds (*respondet*) the superior and inferior part of the desiderative faculty; in particular, the superior part produces an ever-right ‘affective knowledge’, while the inferior one coincides with free will (*liberum arbitrium*) and is prone to error.<sup>45</sup> Consequently, there is a perfect parallelism between the theoretical and the practical order of the soul, as we will also see in connection with the *vita contemplativa*. This

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*superior* and *ratio inferior*: The Historical Background”, *The New Scholasticism* 29 (1955), 1–32.

<sup>42</sup> Robert Kilwardby, *Commentarii* 1 lect. 18, Cf. 295<sup>ra</sup>, Pr f. 11<sup>va</sup>: “Et patet sufficiencia huius divisionis [uirtutum] considerando divisionem intellectus per practicum et speculativum. Intellectuales enim perficiunt speculativum; morales vero practicum”.

<sup>43</sup> Philip the Chancellor, *Summa de bono*, ed. Nikolaus Wicki (Bern, 1985), 104: “Duplex est facies anime superior et inferior, et in utraque est tam cognitiva quam motiva”.

<sup>44</sup> *Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 152<sup>va</sup>: “dicendum est quod, sicut anima secundum partem speculativam habet duplicem naturam secundum quam comparatur ad superiora et haec vocatur intellectus agens, aliam habet secundum quam comparatur ad inferiora et haec vocatur intellectus possibilis. Et secundum intellectum agentem semper est in anima veritas, secundum possibilem non”. It is interesting to note the repeated use of the terms *pars superior* and *pars inferior* in the commentator’s formulation of the structure of the soul. The same terms are used by Algazel to explain the two faces of the soul; see his *Metaphysica* 2.4.5, pp. 172–173. Note also that the commentator considers the agent intellect as a faculty of the soul, in accordance with the so-called ‘first Averroism’, see Gauthier, “Le cours”, 83–92.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*: “Similiter ex parte intellectus practici sunt istae diversae naturae: una quae respondet intellectui agenti, et haec vocatur superior pars intellectus practici; alia respondet intellectui possibili, et vocatur inferior pars intellectus practici, et pars superior semper est ad bonum, inferior non”; cf. *Lectura in Ethicam nouam*, p. 102: “(per) illam partem quae est inferior et miscetur uirtutibus sensibilibus, possunt recte uelle et non uelle, et sic habent liberum arbitrium”.

parallelism is important for understanding the account of the virtues presented by the Parisian master. He defines not only moral but also intellectual virtue as an acquired *habitus* that corresponds not to the intellective faculty but to the superior part of the desiderative faculty.<sup>46</sup> Because this part has both a cognitive and a practical-affective function, it can produce intellectual virtue, which is defined as a synthesis of *cognitio* and *affectio*.<sup>47</sup>

It should be stressed that our masters consider the Aristotelian division of virtue sufficient to regulate human actions and reject the Macrobian division. Macrobius posited four types of virtues: political, purgative, of the purged soul, and exemplary.<sup>48</sup> The *Commentary of Paris*,<sup>49</sup> Pseudo-Peckham,<sup>50</sup> and the so-called *Compendium examinatorium parisiense*<sup>51</sup> see the moral and intellectual virtues as corresponding to Macrobius's political and purgative virtues, respectively, and agree that the other two classes mentioned by Macrobius, the virtues of the purged soul and the exemplary virtues, are not human. They belong, respectively, to the soul separated from the body and to souls in contact with

<sup>46</sup> See below, n. 84.

<sup>47</sup> This contradicts what the master states about the common root of the two virtues situated in the intellective faculty. It seems, however, that he assigns to the superior part of the intellective faculty only innate *habitus*, so the common root could be an innate *habitus* divided into two acquired virtues belonging, as such, to the desiderative faculty.

<sup>48</sup> Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis* 1.8.4–10, ed. James A. Willis (Leipzig, 1970), 37–39.

<sup>49</sup> *Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 154<sup>ra</sup>: “Macrobius dividit virtutes in virtutes exemplares, et in virtutes quae sunt purgati animi, et in virtutes purgatorias et in virtutes politicas. Et appellat virtutes politicas virtutes consuetudinales... Virtutes enim exemplares sunt virtutes quibus cognoscitur primi essentia, et istae non sunt humanae. Iterum uirtus quae dicitur purgati animi non est humana: quia ista uirtus quae postquam anima separata est a corpore... uirtus purgatoria acceditur in comparatione intellectus uel rationis ad superiora, sicut uirtus intellectualis”.

<sup>50</sup> Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem* 22 q. 2, F f. 35<sup>va</sup>, O f. 30<sup>rb</sup>: “Aristoteles non ponit hic diuisionem uirtutis nisi secundum quod inest anime unite corpori. Hec autem uirtus uel est consuetudinalis siue ciuilis, uel purgatoria uel intellectualis. Virtus uero purgati animi est uirtus que quidem inest anime tantum post separationem anime a corpore. Virtus uero exemplaris est uirtus increata que est ipsum primum”.

<sup>51</sup> *Compendium examinatorium parisiense* 102, p. 61: “Item, quare non agit de uirtute exemplari neque de illa que est purgatiua animi. Determinat enim de talibus Macrobius.—Dicimus quod hic agitur solum de uirtute que acquiritur per operationes anime coniuncte corpori. Hec autem est proprie consuetudinalis; que fit in domando passionem sensibiles. Sed alie uirtutes que dicte sunt, sunt anime separate et etiam intelligentie uel angeli, quod idem est”.

the First Principle or to the First Principle itself. In this sense our masters respect Aristotle's intention to investigate only virtues of the embodied soul.

*The moral virtues as regulators of the body and social relations*

The acquisition of moral virtues requires the repetition of many good actions (*ex assuetudine*), as their very name—*consuetudinales* (*a consuetudine*)—suggests. The reason, as explained by Pseudo-Peckham and the commentator of Avranches, is that the actions that form moral virtue derive from the sensory faculties, and the senses are a strong hindrance to good actions. Repetition is needed to tame these faculties, so that they do not make errors,<sup>52</sup> and to prepare them to receive virtuous *habitus*.<sup>53</sup> Kilwardby stresses Aristotle's assertion that moral virtue does not originate in us by nature. We are by nature only fitted to receive virtue, as matter is fitted to receive form. Just as an external agent is necessary to generate the form, so man needs the habitude (*assuetudo*) to generate virtue in himself, as Aristotle states.<sup>54</sup>

Pseudo-Peckham maintains that moral virtues have a double function, namely, governing the body and regulating social relations: “uirtutes morales quibus anima bene ordinat corpus et bene ordinat erga proximum”.<sup>55</sup> The same opinion is expressed by the commentator of

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<sup>52</sup> Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem* 22 q. 6, F f. 36<sup>ra</sup>, O f. 30<sup>va-vb</sup>: “uirtus non dicitur consuetudinalis quia requiratur operatio iterata siue frequens ad ipsam, set quia acquiritur per operationes procedentes a uirtutibus subiectis per imperium rationis, que nisi per assuetudinem cohercemur a ratione semper tendunt ad contrarium”.

<sup>53</sup> *Commentarium abrinense in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 92<sup>r</sup>: “Per unam operationem inducitur dispositio super potentiam et est dispositio bona; sed non est sufficiens ut bene reddat opus propter inclinationem iam dictam que trahit potentiam in contrario. Et ideo necesse est continuari operationem; continuata uero operatione fiet uirtus, quare habitus bonus bene reddit opus. Si uero quaeratur ad quid expediat dispositio illa, dicendum est quod expedit ut prepararetur potentia ad habitum recipiendum”.

<sup>54</sup> Robert Kilwardby, *Commentarii* 2 lect. 1, Cf. 295<sup>va</sup>: “uirtus consuetudinalis non fit in nobis a natura, et addit [Aristoteles] quod nec fiunt in nobis uirtutes contra naturam; immo nos innati sumus suscipere uirtutem... Et ad hoc intelligendum, nota quod sicut materia nata est suscipere formam, indiget tamen exteriori agente generante formam in ea, similiter nos nati sumus suscipere uirtutem, indigemus tamen aliquo exteriori agente, ut ipsa generetur in nobis. Quod quidem agens secundum Aristotilem uidetur maxime esse assuetudo”.

<sup>55</sup> Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem* 21 q. 7, F f. 33<sup>vb</sup>, O f. 29<sup>rb</sup>.

Avranches, who calls the moral virtues suited to perfect the body not only *consuetudinales* but also *politicae*, because they affect relations between people.<sup>56</sup> John of La Rochelle, too, maintains that moral virtue regulates both the operations that man devotes to the care of himself (*ad se*) and those carried out towards his neighbour (*ad proximum*). He couples these two functions with the two moral virtues mentioned by Aristotle in the first book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*: *honestas* and *liberalitas* respectively.<sup>57</sup> A gloss on the *Ethica vetus* also combines the individual and social aspect of the moral virtue.<sup>58</sup>

More numerous, however, are the Arts Masters who stress only the individual function of moral virtue. Both the author of the *Commentary of Paris* and Kilwardby maintain that its task consists in rightly ordering the relations of man with things inferior to him<sup>59</sup> and that the faculty involved in this is the practical intellect.<sup>60</sup> The Commentator of Avranches, in spite of his reference to the political function of moral virtue, emphasizes that moral virtue perfects the body by accustoming the faculties pertaining to the senses to perform right actions.<sup>61</sup> The idea that moral virtue is used to govern the body and its passions also occurs in Arnulf of Provence's *Divisio scientiarum*<sup>62</sup> and in the *Compendium*

<sup>56</sup> *Commentarium abrinense in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 90<sup>r</sup>: “(in) comparationem quam habet ad corpus, quod natum est perfici ab ea, erit uirtus consuetudinalis, que alio nomine dicitur politica, dicitur enim consuetudine formatur; politica uero quia per eam conueniens est hominibus conuersari cum hominibus”.

<sup>57</sup> John of La Rochelle, *Tractatus de divisione multiplici potentiarum animae* 3.1.7, ed. Pierre Michaud-Quantin (Paris, 1964), 159: “Item ad hominem ordinatur dupliciter, ad se scilicet et ad proximum; et secundum hoc est duplex uirtus consuetudinalis, honestas et liberalitas: honestas enim ordinat hominem ad seipsum, liberalitas autem ordinat hominem ad alterum sive ad proximum”.

<sup>58</sup> Quoted in René-Antoine Gauthier, “Arnoul de Provence et la doctrine de la *fronesis*, vertu mystique suprême”, *Revue du moyen âge latin* 19 (1963), 149 n. 49: “uirtus consuetudinalis dicitur ex conversione ipsius intellectus ad se ipsum vel ad sibi proximum”.

<sup>59</sup> *Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 155<sup>ra</sup>: “uirtus consuetudinalis [est] in comparatione ad inferiora”; Robert Kilwardby, *Commentarii* 1 lect. 18, Cf. 295<sup>rb</sup>, Pr f. 11<sup>va</sup>: “per morales intelliguntur uirtutes que bene ordinant hominem ad hec inferiora”.

<sup>60</sup> Robert Kilwardby, *Commentarii* 1 lect. 18, Cf. 295<sup>ra</sup>, Pr f. 11<sup>va</sup>: “morales [perficiunt] uero practicum”; “consistunt circa eandem partem rationalem in comparatione ad sensitivam”; *Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 155<sup>rb</sup>: “Cum uirtus [consuetudinalis] attendatur in comparatione intellectus practici ad sensibilem [cod. sensualitatem], cum sit ibi illud quod maxime impedit uirtutem, hoc est sensualitas, manifestum est quod plures operationes exiguntur ad uirtutem consuetudinalem”.

<sup>61</sup> *Commentarium abrinense in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 90<sup>v</sup>: “perficere corpus secundum uirtutes motiuas”, f. 91<sup>v</sup>: “per eam assuescunt potentie sensibiles ad debitam ordinationis rationis”.

<sup>62</sup> Arnulf of Provence, *Divisio scientiarum*, ed. Claude Lafleur, in id. and Joanne

*examinatorium*.<sup>63</sup> This position was widespread among theologians too. It is found in the *Speculum doctrinale* of Vincent of Beauvais<sup>64</sup> and in the *De potentiis animae et obiectis*, a treatise probably written by an English theologian.<sup>65</sup>

We might observe, then, that the *ad proximum* function of moral virtue is often neglected by our commentators. In this respect they deviate from Aristotle's thought, who in the *Nicomachean Ethics* considers the social dimension a fundamental condition for the attainment of happiness. I will return to this subject later. Suffice it to say for the moment that the absence of the social function of moral virtue principally characterizes those texts—such as the *Commentary of Paris*, Arnulf's *Divisio scientiarum*, and the *De potentiis*—which more than others emphasize the double orientation of the soul *ad superiora* and *ad inferiora*, in accordance with the scheme of the two *facies* of the soul.<sup>66</sup>

It should be stressed that some masters of the period divide moral virtue into the four virtues of prudence, courage, temperance, and justice. Among our commentators, only Pseudo-Peckham adds this division, according to which *temperantia* regulates actions pertaining to the concupiscible faculty, *fortitudo* those belonging to the irascible faculty, and *prudentia* and *iustitia* those of the rational faculty.<sup>67</sup> The author does not label them cardinal virtues, which distinguishes him from Arnulf, who explicitly couples the term *cardinales* with *consuetudinales* and pre-

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Carrier, *Quatre introductions à la philosophie au XIIIe siècle: Textes critiques et étude historique* (Montréal-Paris, 1988), 335–336: “Bonum autem quod est uirtus dividitur secundum diversum respectum anime quo inclinatur ad regendum corpus vel quo erigitur ad contemplantum Deum”.

<sup>63</sup> *Compendium examinatorium parisiense* 79, p. 55: “[uirtus] consuetudinalis uero per asseruationem et dominationem potentiarum inferiorum uel motuum carnalium”.

<sup>64</sup> Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum doctrinale* (Douai, 1624; repr. Graz, 1964), 302: “Aliud est bonum datum ipsi anime ad regendum corpus in quo est, custodiendo ipsum a motibus illicitis, tum intrinsecus, tum extrinsecus. Huiusmodi bonum dicitur uirtus consuetudinalis, que sic dicitur quia facit corpus assuescere in bonum, sicut uult Aristoteles in *Ethicis*, et de tali bono tractat Aristoteles in *Veteri ethica*”.

<sup>65</sup> *De potentiis animae et obiectis*, ed. Daniel A. Callus, “The Powers of the Soul: An Early Unpublished Text”, *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 19 (1952), 161: “[uirtus] motiva convertitur ad regendum corpus”.

<sup>66</sup> Arnulf and the author of *De potentiis* use exactly the same phrase as Algazel and Gundissalinus: *ad regendum corpus*; see below, nn. 68–69.

<sup>67</sup> Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem* 22 q. 1, F f. 35<sup>ra</sup>, O f. 30<sup>ra</sup>: “uirtus uero consuetudinalis in bene se habendo erga proximum, quod patet discurrendo per differentias eius: *temperantia* enim dirigit hominem erga proximum quoad operationes pertinentes ad concupiscentiam, similiter *fortitudo* quoad operationes pertinentes ad irascibilem, *prudentia* uero et *iustitia* quoad operationes pertinentes ad rationalem licet differenter sicut postea dicitur”.

serves the same correspondence between virtues and faculties.<sup>68</sup> The author of the *De potentiis*, who also avoids the term ‘cardinal,’ uses the same division, yet with a difference: he considers temperance, courage, and prudence to be produced by the act of the three faculties (*actus virium*)—the concupiscible, irascible, and rational, respectively—while justice is ordered to all these acts together.<sup>69</sup> Despite the absence of explicit reference to the cardinal virtues, which might suggest a recovery of the original Platonic and Stoic scheme of the four virtues, the division made by Pseudo-Peckham, modelled on the three faculties of the soul, recalls the classifications of the cardinal virtues made by theologians of this period, particularly that formulated by Philip the Chancellor, who, like the *De potentiis*, distinguishes the four virtues according to the principal acts of the three faculties.<sup>70</sup>

*The intellectual virtues: knowledge and love of the First Principle*

Our commentators devote special attention to intellectual virtue because of its fundamental function in leading us to happiness, the First Principle. All commentators maintain that we are oriented through intellectual virtue towards superior beings, and that this virtue consists in knowing and loving the First Principle,<sup>71</sup> i.e., God.<sup>72</sup> The com-

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<sup>68</sup> Arnulf of Provence, *Divisio scientiarum*, p. 336: “Secundum uero partem qua ad corpus regendum inclinatur bene operando, acquirit anima habitus uirtutum: ut regendo rationalem potentiam, prudentiam et iustitiam; in regendo irascibilem, fortitudinem; in gubernando concupiscibilem, temperantiam. Que sunt .III.<sup>or</sup> uirtutes cardinales que etiam consuetudinales dicuntur”.

<sup>69</sup> *De potentiis animae et obiectis*, p. 161: “Si secundum principales actus virium dicentur quatuor uirtutes: nam aut erit prudentia, que accipitur secundum actum rationalis; aut erit fortitudo, que accipitur secundum actum irascibilis; aut temperantia, que accipitur secundum actum concupiscibilis; aut erit in ordine istorum omnium, et tunc dicetur iustitia... Et hec est differentia uirtutum in quantum motiva convertitur ad regendum corpus”.

<sup>70</sup> Philip the Chancellor, *Summa de bono*, pp. 745–746; cf. Thomas Graf, *De subiecto psychico uirtutum cardinalium secundum doctrinam scholasticorum usque ad medium saeculum XIV* (Rome, 1935).

<sup>71</sup> Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem* 22 q. 1, F f. 35<sup>ra</sup>, O f. 30<sup>ra</sup>: “uirtus intellectualis consistit in cognitione et dilectione summi boni propter se”; *Commentarium abrinense in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 90<sup>r</sup>: “Est autem [anima] nata perfici ab essentia Primi, in qua comparatione habet uirtutem intellectualem eo quod non potest ei coniungi nisi per cognitionem et affectum”; *Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 154<sup>ra</sup>: “complementum ipsius [uirtus intellectualis] est cum dilectione et affectu eiusdem”.

<sup>72</sup> The masters use several expressions of (Neo-)Platonic origin—*Primum*, *Prima Cau-*

mentator of Avranches considers *contemplatio* as the initial moment of intellectual virtue, which is subsequently perfected by the affection.<sup>73</sup> Kilwardby, in commenting on Aristotle's triple division of intellectual virtue into *intelligentia*, *sapientia*, and *fronesis*, assigns the task of knowing and loving the First only to the virtue of *sapientia*. Although in this respect he conforms to traditional theology, he shows himself to be an attentive reader of the Aristotelian text in recognizing the identity of *prudentia* and *fronesis*, which he mentions in conformity with the traditional definition of prudence as the choice of objects previously known and loved.<sup>74</sup> Less attentive readers are Pseudo-Peckham and Arnulf of Provence, who, as we will see, assign to *fronesis* the supreme role of knowledge and affection. The *Compendium examinatorium* chiefly emphasizes the affective role of intellectual virtue, which urges to love the First more than any other thing.<sup>75</sup>

Sifting through the texts, it is possible to find some further information about the role of intellectual virtue in man's longing for the divine.<sup>76</sup> In the *Commentary of Paris*, despite the absence of the final part on the *Ethica nova*—a gap which I try to fill by drawing on Pseudo-Peckham and Arnulf—the cognitive and affective path which leads to happiness is contained in the description of the *vita contemplativa*. The commentator says that happiness can be predicated of this life, albeit only according to the opinion of the philosophers.<sup>77</sup> Contemplative life

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*sa, Prima Essentia, Summum Bonum*—to denote the transcendent absolute being, which they identify, often explicitly, with the Christian God; see Buffon, "Philosophers and Theologians", 460–464; Zavattero, "Felicità e Principio Primo", 113–123.

<sup>73</sup> *Commentarium abrinense in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 91<sup>v</sup>: "uirtus intellectualis inchoatur a contemplatione et perficitur in affectu".

<sup>74</sup> Robert Kilwardby, *Commentarii* 1 lect. 18, Cf. 295<sup>rb</sup>, Pr f. 11<sup>va</sup>: "Uirtus autem intellectualis aut consistit in cognoscendo primum, et sic est intelligencia, aut in cognoscendo et diligendo et sic sapientia, aut in electione et participacione aliqua ipsius cogniti et amati et sic fronesis".

<sup>75</sup> *Compendium examinatorium parisiense* 101, p. 61. The *Compendium* considers intellectual virtue as totally spiritual and therefore maintains that its properties cannot be known: it belongs only to those who are inspired by the divine grace in the highest degree.

<sup>76</sup> For a detailed analysis see Irene Zavattero, "Il ruolo conoscitivo delle virtù intellettuali nei primi commenti latini del XIII secolo all'*Ethica nicomachea*", in *Etica e conoscenza*, 15–26.

<sup>77</sup> *Lectura in Ethicam nouam*, p. 116: "de illa uita que est cum anima separata potest predicari felicitas et sic patet quod non sumit hic sufficienter modos ipsius uite. Et ista respontio est penes theologos. Est autem alia respontio secundum philosophos et hec est respontio. Dicendum est quod uita in quam ponendo felicitatem non errabant philosophi predicatur de uita contemplatiua". *Penes theologos*, contemplative life is imperfect and only the life of the separate soul is really happy.

is a synthesis of knowledge and virtue, more precisely of a knowledge without images (*cognitio sine fantasmate*) together with the virtue belonging to the superior part of the practical intellect or desiderative faculty.<sup>78</sup>

The Parisian master does not give any explanation of this knowledge without images. Nevertheless, as pointed out by René-Antoine Gauthier, the phrase *cognitio sine fantasmate* is used in other contemporary texts such as the *De potentiis* and Philip the Chancellor's *Summa de bono* to denote the illumination that the agent intellect receives from the First Principle.<sup>79</sup> The author of the *Commentary of Paris* also mentions the *cognitio in summa*, a type of knowledge denoting a similar exclusion of the data originating from the senses.<sup>80</sup> As Boethius states, this is an innate *habitus* of the agent intellect, an indistinct and global knowledge by which the intellect "retains the idea of the whole, while it loses memory of particulars".<sup>81</sup> According to this theory, which the Parisian master once again takes from Philip the Chancellor,<sup>82</sup> the agent intellect has an innate knowledge of intelligibles, not hampered by the senses and exempt from error. The *cognitio in summa* seems therefore to coincide with the *cognitio sine fantasmate*. Both could be interpreted as a trans-

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.: "uita que est idem felicitati predicatur de uita contemplatiua in quantum uita contemplatiua est circa cognitionem sine fantasmate et uirtutem que est circa partem superiorem intellectus practici siue uirtutis desideratiue".

<sup>79</sup> Gauthier, "Le cours", 81. The master frequently mentions the illumination; see above, n. 17 and *Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 153<sup>ra</sup>: "Et intellectus agens plus recipit illuminationem a primo quam possibilis".

<sup>80</sup> *Lectura in Ethicam nouam*, p. 102: "intellectus agens, qui habet cognitionem omnium rerum in summa et indistincte; unde dicit Boethius: 'Summam retinet singula perdit'; et in cognitione huiusmodi intellectus non potest esse error"; *Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 152<sup>va</sup>: "humana anima secundum partem quae uocatur agens habet cognitionem rerum in summa, et ista cognitio seu habitus innascitur cum ipsa anima; item anima nascitur cum amore Primi, et iste habitus seu istud desiderium est innatum"; f. 153<sup>va</sup>: "intellectus agens habet cognitionem rerum in summa; unde dicit Boethius: 'Summam retinet, singula perdit'. Sic ergo patet quod intellectus agens non cognoscit res uel species rerum singillatim, et sic non potest facere cognitionem rerum singillatim in intellectu possibili".

<sup>81</sup> Boethius, *Philosophiae consolatio* 5 m. 3, ed. Ludovicus Bieler, CCSL 94: 96: "Nunc membrorum condita nube / non in totum est oblita sui / summamque tenet singula perdens". In this passage Boethius expresses the state of knowledge of the soul, which, having lost its original purity, finds itself immersed in the body and yet does not completely forget its previous condition.

<sup>82</sup> Philip the Chancellor, *Summa de bono*, p. 85: "Item est alia operatio intellectus agentis secundum quam intelligit res omnes uel aliquas per quasdam formas innatas que sunt forme singularium rerum secundum quod sunt singule, prout dicit Boethius: 'Qui summam retinet, singula perdit'".



position into abstract terms of the theory of illumination, according to which the superior intellect sees things in God.<sup>83</sup>

As for the virtue involved in the definition of *vita contemplativa*, the master gives us more detailed information. As already observed, this intellectual virtue corresponds to the superior part of the desiderative faculty. This part of the soul innately possesses love and contemplation, that is, it loves and contemplates the First Principle indistinctly (*in summa*).<sup>84</sup> In this sense, the intellectual virtue corresponding to it is an innate *habitus*. Nevertheless, thanks to teaching (*ex doctrina*), this part of the soul knows in a distinct way the attributes of the First—Goodness, Power, and Wisdom<sup>85</sup>—and makes intellectual virtue an acquired *habitus*. Therefore, intellectual virtue contributes to the realization of the *vita contemplativa* through a *cognitio cum affectu* of the First Principle.<sup>86</sup> Here we see a clear correspondence between the superior parts of the soul's speculative and the desiderative faculties: both possess an innate knowledge which makes them act "indistinctly" (*in summa*); both are directed to the good and are free from error. The result of their combined action is the synthesis of *cognitio sine fantasmate* and *cognitio cum affectu*. It is, in other words, the affective knowledge of the First Principle arising from the act of love for him and from divine illumination, in which resides the happiness that the commentator identifies with the Primum, i.e., God.

The *De potentiis*, identified by Gauthier as a source of the *Commentary of Paris*,<sup>87</sup> also includes the doctrine of affective knowledge, although it

<sup>83</sup> Lottin, *Psychologie et morale* 1: 515.

<sup>84</sup> *Lectura in Ethicam veterem*, ff. 154<sup>rb</sup>–154<sup>ra</sup>: "pars desiderativa quantum ad superiorem partem habet dilectionem et affectum sibi innata, sed hoc est in summa; unde in summa habet predilectionem et contemplationem; tamen ex doctrina, sicut prius dictum est, cognoscit bonitatem et potentiam et sapientiam discrete, et quia cognoscit bonitatem discrete, ideo diligit, et sic afficitur, et sic fit consummatio virtutis intellectualis; et hoc modo est virtus intellectualis habitus acquisitus et non innatus".

<sup>85</sup> These are the attributes that the Victorines considered as expressing the three persons of the Trinity; see *Lectura in Ethicam nouam*, p. 121, n. (h). The triad became quite popular thanks to its inclusion in Peter Lombard, *Sententiae* I.34.3–4, ed. collegium S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas (Grottaferrata, 1971–1982), 251–253.

<sup>86</sup> *Lectura in Ethicam nouam*, p. 102: "pars intellectus practici superior desiderat et appetit et cognoscit, set ista cognitio est cum affectu".

<sup>87</sup> Gauthier, "Le cours", 77–92. The theory of the soul formulated in *De potentiis* exerted a strong influence on the theologians of the first half of the thirteenth century, particularly on Philip the Chancellor and the author of the Parisian commentary. *De potentiis* recapitulates a large part of the doctrine of the treatise *De anima et potenciis eius*; cf. René-Antoine Gauthier, "Le traité *De anima et de potenciis eius* d'un maître ès arts

does not use the formula *cognitio cum affectu* found in the Parisian commentary. The author of the treatise considers the division of intellectual virtue into *fronesis*, *sapientia*, and *intelligentia* as a triple modality of knowledge and love of the Highest Good.<sup>88</sup> From this passage Pseudo-Peckham and Arnulf of Provence could have drawn their inspiration for explaining the division of the three intellectual virtues, characterized by a crescendo of knowledge and love which culminates in *fronesis*. Pseudo-Peckham sees in the three intellectual virtues three steps on a cognitive scale, in which *sapientia*, corresponding to the lower level, knows the Highest Good in the inferior things;<sup>89</sup> *intelligentia*, an intellectual affection for the Highest Truth, knows the realities that are intelligible to man;<sup>90</sup> and *fronesis*, which stands at the top of the scale, is the loving knowledge of the Highest Good, known in the spiritual creatures that reflect God's image to the highest degree.<sup>91</sup> Arnulf maintains that *intelligentia* is the *habitus* acquired by the intellect when its superior part looks at the Creator, although in this phase the contemplative act is not characterized by a great love. Subsequently, when the contemplative act is produced with a greater affective intensity, the intellect comes to possess the virtue of *sapientia*. If the affection increases so far as to become burning, then the intellect conforms to the contemplated Creator, thus acquiring *fronesis*.<sup>92</sup> Thus *fronesis* represents the highest degree of loving

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(vers 1225): Introduction et texte critique", *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 61 (1982), 3–55.

<sup>88</sup> *De potentiis animae et obiectis*, p. 161: "Habitus autem qui est in comparatione ad superiore essentiam et nominatur uirtus intellectualis, dividitur per tres differentias, scilicet fronesim, sapientiam, intelligentiam, secundum quod tripliciter est cognoscere Summum bonum et cognitum (quemadmodum est (al)ibi determinatum) diligere".

<sup>89</sup> Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem* 21 q. 7, F f. 33<sup>vb</sup>, O f. 29<sup>rb-va</sup>: "Si uero sapientia dicatur cognitio summi boni in inferioribus cum aliquo gustu participationem eius et sic eius dilectio, sapientia erit nobilior uirtutibus moralibus et secundum hunc modum uidebitur hic accipi".

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.* f. 33<sup>vb</sup>, O f. 29<sup>va</sup>: "Intelligentia potest eodem modo accipi dupliciter vel pro habitu rerum intelligibilium, vel pro intelligibili affectione ex habitu intelligibilium procedente"; *ibid.* F f. 33<sup>rb</sup>, O f. 28<sup>vb</sup>: "... intelligentiam, id est cognitio relata ad cognitionem summi veri".

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.* f. 33<sup>vb</sup>, O f. 29<sup>va</sup>: "Fronesis uero est cognitio summi boni cum dilectione eius prout cognitio summi boni est per intelligibiles creaturas in quibus maxime relucet eius imago secundum quod possibile est in creaturis suis relucere".

<sup>92</sup> Arnulf of Provence, *Divisio scientiarum*, p. 336: "Nam secundum quod per partem superiorem intuetur Creatorem absque multa et magna affectione, informatur habitu uirtutis qui dicitur intelligentia; secundum uero quod ulterius per affectionem extenditur et affectus intenditur, informatur secundo habitu uirtutis qui dicitur sapientia, quasi sapore condita; secundum quod per intensum affectum et amorem inflammatur ut Illi,

knowledge and conforms man to God, depriving wisdom of the place at the top of the scale of the virtues that Augustinian theology assigns to it. Although we lack the final part of the *Commentary of Paris* on the *Ethica nova*, and therefore do not know its specific treatment of the three intellectual virtues, we are perhaps entitled to infer from several passages of the commentary that the author followed the same way as Pseudo-Peckham and Arnulf, defining intellectual virtue as *contemplatio primi cum dilectione et affectu*.<sup>93</sup>

The peculiar account of *fronesis* in Pseudo-Peckham and Arnulf, which has been discussed by several scholars,<sup>94</sup> shows that the two masters have not recognized the identity of *fronesis* and *prudentia* in the Aristotelian text. Indeed, they convert the former into the supreme contemplative virtue and the latter into a moral virtue having the sole function of enabling the rational faculty to govern the body. On the one hand, this interpretation fails to recognize Aristotle's doctrine of practical wisdom; on the other hand, it upsets the Christian hierarchy of the virtues. Consider, however, the end to which this doctrine leads, namely, the mystic union with the divine. Since the end to be achieved, happiness defined as the First Principle or God, is so high and perfect, the means to reach it—the three intellectual virtues—become the steps of a gradual process of asceticism. The contemplation referred to in these texts, as clearly stated in the *Commentary of Paris*, is not the contemplation of rational or natural philosophy but that of the intellectual virtues, which, unlike the former, is capable of producing union with the First Principle.<sup>95</sup>

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quantum possibile est, se conformet, acquiritur ei habitus uirtutis qui dicitur fronesis, id est informatio”.

<sup>93</sup> See above, n. 71.

<sup>94</sup> Gauthier, “Arnoul de Provence”, 150–154; Celano, “The End of Practical Wisdom” 230–232; Claude Lafleur, “*Scientia et ars* dans les introductions à la philosophie des maîtres ès arts de l’Université de Paris au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle”, in *Scientia und ars im Hoch- und Spätmittelalter*, ed. Ingrid Craemer-Ruegenberg and Andreas Speer (Berlin–New York, 1994), 59–62; Ingham, “*Phronesis and Prudentia*”, 648–649.

<sup>95</sup> *Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 155<sup>rb</sup>: “Ad primum dicendum est quod duplex est contemplatio quaedam enim est contemplatio quae est finis rerum naturalium vel rationalium et quaedam est contemplatio quae est finis virtutum intellectualium et contemplatio quod est finis rationalis philosophiae vel naturalis non est nobilior quam virtus sive bonum fieri quia secundum virtutem unimur Primo secundum autem illam speculationem non, sed illa speculatio quae est finis intellectualium virtutum est nobilior virtute quia magis sit unio ad primum per ipsam quam per virtutem consuetudinalem”. The double contemplation is also mentioned in Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem* 24 q. 1, F f. 38<sup>vb</sup>, O f. 32<sup>tb</sup>, Pr f. 13<sup>tb</sup>.

From the above considerations it is evident that Aristotle's intellectual virtues are given the same role as the theological virtues, which theologians of the time considered capable of disposing man towards union with the Creator. Although the commentators do not make any explicit reference to the theological virtues, they do mention the infused virtues.

*The complementarity of the moral and intellectual virtues*

Summarizing what has been observed so far, the virtues operate on three different levels: moral virtue operates in relation to the body and one's neighbour, intellectual virtue in relation to God. In the *Commentary of Paris* these three levels are found in the description of the three possible lives listed by Aristotle—*voluptuosa*, *civilis*, *contemplativa*—where the author makes each life correspond to one of the three possible orientations of the intellectual soul: downwards, upwards, and *in equali*.<sup>96</sup> In expounding the doctrine of virtues, the master reduces the levels to two: in relation to the body and in relation to the First Principle. The scheme of the three lives as reshaped to two classes of virtues also occurs in the *De potentiis*,<sup>97</sup> which probably inspired the *Commentary of Paris*. Both texts disregard the 'middle' level of the 'civil' life; to this corresponds moral virtue according to its *ad proximum* function, which, however, the two authors do not mention. As noted above, the exclusion of the social aspect can be ascribed to the arrangement of virtues according to the soul's double orientation *ad superiora* and *ad inferiora*. This psychological scheme results in a restriction of ethical

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<sup>96</sup> *Lectura in Ethicam nouam*, p. 115: "Aliter dicendum est quod iste tres uite sumuntur penes animam intellectiuam. Set notandum quod anima intellectiua siue humana habet triplicem comparationem: comparatur enim ad corpus quod sub ipsa est, et comparatur ad ea que supra ipsum sunt, et comparatur ad ea que in equali se habent cum ipsa. Et uita uoluptuosa attenditur (in comparatione) anime humane ad corpus quod sub ipsa est... Vita autem ciuilis attenditur in comparatione unius anime humane ad aliam, vel unius hominis ad alium hominem... Vita autem contemplatiua sumitur in comparatione anime humane ad superiora siue ad felicitatem, quia uirtus secundum quam attenditur uita contemplatiua est medium quo nobis unitur felicitas".

<sup>97</sup> *De potentiis animae et obiectis*, pp. 159–160: "Superiora uero uoco bona diuina; media uero uoco bona civilia; inferiora uero bona uoluptuosa, que sunt in se secundum naturam delectabilia. Et possunt distingui secundum triplicem uitam contemplatiuam, ciuilem et uoluptuosam".

discussion to individuals. The moral subject described by the masters is man isolated from his social context, who must be perfected to attain union with God.

As Georg Wieland points out, our commentators form a category of authors who differ significantly from Aristotle in neglecting the political or intersubjective dimension of the moral.<sup>98</sup> They did not know the fifth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, where Aristotle describes the virtue of justice which, in a political sense, is practised in civil society. Their exaltation of the contemplative life, much more marked than in Aristotle, brings with it a devaluation of the civil or political life. The *Commentary of Paris* even reduces the civil life, together with the voluptuous one, to the same level as the life of beasts (*vita pecudum*).<sup>99</sup>

We should not, however, neglect those texts which emphasize the *ad proximum* function of the moral virtue. Pseudo-Peckham, who fully understands the importance of civil life for the Philosopher, says: “Aristotle understands happiness only as that which is acquired through a correct dialogue among fellow citizens; therefore he calls it civil good”.<sup>100</sup> The most suitable virtue for the attainment of this ‘civil good’ is moral virtue. Intellectual virtue is acquired mainly outside the city, as is obvious with those in the cloisters.<sup>101</sup> This consideration is of special interest, because it shows that the master understands intellectual virtues as specific to religious people devoted to contemplation in the solitude of the cloister, a view perfectly in line with his ‘mystical’ interpretation of *fronesis*.

Furthermore, Pseudo-Peckham maintains that it is not sufficient to behave rightly towards one’s neighbour; one must act through the

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<sup>98</sup> Wieland, *Ethica-scientia practica*, 94–98. Lafleur notes that the anonymous author of the introduction to philosophy *Dicit Aristotiles* is an exception because he assigns supremacy to the political good; see Lafleur, “La *Philosophia* d’Hervé le Breton (alias Henri le Breton) et le recueil d’introductions à la philosophie du ms. Oxford, Corpus Christi College 283 (première partie)”, *Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 62 (1995), 176–181.

<sup>99</sup> *Lectura in Ethicam nouam*, pp. 110–111: “quidam sunt qui eligunt uitam pecudum, et isti sunt bestiales; illi enim qui uitam uoluptuosam eligunt uere sunt bestiales; similiter illi qui eligunt uitam ciuilem sunt bestiales, quia uiuunt secundum animam sencibilem et non secundum rationalem, et ideo dicuntur bestiales”.

<sup>100</sup> Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem* 22 q. 4, F f. 35<sup>vb</sup>, O f. 30<sup>va</sup>: “Aristoteles non intendit de felicitate nisi secundum quod acquiritur recta conuersatione inter conciuies, unde nominabat eam bonum ciuile”.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*: “ex recta conuersatione inter conciuies non acquiritur nisi uirtus consuetudinalis, intellectualis autem magis acquiritur in separatione a ciuitatibus, sicut patet in claustralibus”.

knowledge and the love that lead to the First Principle. Since such knowledge is produced by intellectual virtue and regulates our relationships with our neighbour, and since moral virtue does not operate rightly without intellectual virtue, intellectual virtue is indispensable.<sup>102</sup> Pseudo-Peckham specifies that this is the point of view of the theologian and of revealed Truth, while the Philosopher “perhaps” (*forte*) considers moral virtue to be sufficient and “perhaps” (*fortasse*) regards intellectual virtue as just a *quaedam lux* preparatory to moral virtue. In this passage the author seems to share theological doctrine, by which he completes ‘finalistically’ his explanation of the *ad proximum* function of the moral virtue. He shows himself to be unsure about Aristotle’s account of the virtues, as revealed by his repetition of “perhaps” and his failure to recognize the key role of intellectual virtues in Aristotle. He is probably misled by Aristotle’s definition of moral virtue as a *habitus a quo quis est bonus et opus est bonum reddit*, which might suggest that any other virtue is superfluous.

The complementarity of moral and intellectual virtue described in these commentaries reflects the view of contemporary theologians. Following the example of Philip the Chancellor, theologians based the complementarity of the cardinal and the theological virtues on the same double orientation of the soul, Avicennian descent, and the teleological perspective aiming at the union with God.<sup>103</sup> We may therefore conclude that the Arts Masters of the first half of the thirteenth century developed a solid theory of the virtues based on a complex structure

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid. 22 q. 1, F f. 35<sup>rb</sup>, O f. 30<sup>ra</sup>: “Ad aliud dico quod quia ⟨non⟩ sufficit bene se habere erga proximum nisi per cognitionem et affectum ordinatum respectu sui principii et finis propter quam ordinat se ad suum proximum, ideo non sufficit uirtus consuetudinalis sed requiritur ultra uirtus intellectualis. Quod obicitur quod uirtus consuetudinalis bonum facit, dico quod non nisi sumpta intellectuali et hoc quidem secundum ueritatem et secundum theologum est dicendum quia forte secundum philosophum uirtus intellectualis non est necessaria sed sufficeret. Unde fortasse philosophus diceret quod uirtus intellectualis non esset nisi quedam lux et quedam preparatio ad consuetudinalem”. On the necessity of the intellectual virtue cf. also *Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*, f. 154<sup>va</sup>: “virtus est habitus qui potest separari... cum virtus sit habitus separabilis, oportuit praeter consuetudinalem esse aliam virtutem, scilicet intellectualem, sicut ostensum est”.

<sup>103</sup> Philip the Chancellor, *Summa de bono*, p. 701: “Constat quod virtutes que ordinant hominem recte ad proximum sunt preordinate ad illas que sunt in Deum. Sicut autem Augustinus, quatuor virtutes cardinales sunt, per quas homo recte ordinatur ad proximum, prudentia etc., tres per quas homo ordinatur ad Deum, scilicet fides, spes, caritas”. See Lottin, *Psychologie et morale* 3: 180–184.

of the soul and in many ways similar to the theory of masters of the Faculty of Theology who were active in the same period. The sometimes inaccurate exposition of the Aristotelian text and the insertion of theological concepts into these commentaries result from their apparent wish to bring the Peripatetic theories in accordance with Christian doctrine.

VIRTUS IN THE NAPLES COMMENTARY  
ON THE *ETHICA NOVA* (MS NAPLES, BIBLIOTECA  
NAZIONALE, VIII G 8, FF. 4<sup>RA</sup>–9<sup>VB</sup>)

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How did the study of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* by Latin academics in the thirteenth century influence Christian moral discourse and in particular its discourse about virtue? This is a large and difficult question, to be sure, and one of obvious interest to any genealogist of Western moral consciousness. In order to answer it, we must first understand how thirteenth-century Latin academics understood Aristotle's text and, more narrowly, the relation of its doctrines to Christian ones. Evidence pertinent to those questions can of course be found in many sources.<sup>1</sup> This article collects and assesses evidence from one early and largely unknown source: the *lectio cum questionibus* on chapters 4–10 of the *Ethica nova* preserved in MS Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, VIII G 8, ff. 4<sup>ra</sup>–9<sup>vb</sup>.<sup>2</sup>

The “Naples Commentary” appears to derive from lectures delivered by a master in the Faculty of Arts at Paris at sometime between 1225 and 1240.<sup>3</sup> It is one of the six extant Latin commentaries which examine all or part of the first three books of the *Ethics*, and are

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<sup>1</sup> Among the most promising sources are commentaries on Peter Lombard's *Sententiae* written by theologians acquainted with the entirety of the *Nicomachean Ethics*; in distinction 33 and elsewhere, the Lombard treats the cardinal virtues explicitly and at length.

<sup>2</sup> A fourteenth-century compiler placed the Naples Commentary in a codex together with excerpts from Albert the Great's *Super Ethica commentum et quaestiones* and Thomas Aquinas's *Sententia libri Ethicorum*, yielding a continuous commentary on all ten books of the *Ethics*. For a description of the codex, see René-Antoine Gauthier, “Praefatio”, in Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum, Opera omnia* (Rome, 1882–) 47: 22\*–23\*. Cf. Wilhelm Kübel, “Prolegomena”, in Albert the Great, *Super Ethica*, ed. Wilhelm Kübel, 2 vols., *Opera omnia* (Münster, 1951–) 14: X.

<sup>3</sup> For discussion of its authorship and dating, see Martin J. Tracey, “An Early 13th-Century Commentary on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* I, 4–10: The *Lectio cum questionibus* of an Arts-Master at Paris in MS Napoli, Biblioteca Nazionale, VIII G 8, ff. 4<sup>r</sup>–9<sup>v</sup>”, *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 17 (2006), 23–69.



based on a translation that antedates Robert Grosseteste's translation of 1247/48.<sup>4</sup>

Relatively little has been written about the work, which was lost to medievalists until 1937.<sup>5</sup> To date only two scholars have discussed its contents in detail. They have done so, moreover, on the basis of a small number of loci and in respect of two main subjects: our Commentator's understanding of *felicitas* and *scientia moralis*.<sup>6</sup> Until very recently, those who would read the Naples Commentary were obliged to do so in manuscript; a critical edition was not published until 2006.<sup>7</sup>

The subject of *virtus* is not an easy one to trace in the Naples Commentary, because, unlike other pre-1250 commentaries, it does not include any discussion of Aristotle's "treatise on virtue" in books 2 and 3 of the *Ethics*. More challenging still, our Commentator never mentions by name any particular virtue, such as *fortitudo* or *temperantia*. He consistently uses the word *virtus* in the sense of the power of soul; in his text, it is most commonly a synonym for *potentia*. It rarely denotes "moral excellence" in general or any particular moral excellence. If one were to make a list of human *virtutes* based on the Naples Commentator's characteristic use of the word, bravery and temperance would not be on it but reason and imagination would.

Aristotle's teaching on virtue was not as difficult for thirteenth-century Latin academics to assimilate as were some other parts of his moral

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<sup>4</sup> For discussion of the manuscript tradition, authorship, and dating of these commentaries, see Georg Wieland, *Ethica-scientia practica: Die Anfänge der philosophischen Ethik im 13. Jahrhundert* (Münster, 1981), 44–51. The *Ethica nova* and the *Ethica vetus* are now believed, along with the *Ethica hoferiana* and *Ethica borghesiana*, to be the work of the twelfth-century Greco-Latin translator Burgundio of Pisa. For an overview of the evidence supporting this conclusion, see Gudrun Vuillemin-Diem and Marwan Rashed, "Burgundio de Pise et ses manuscrits grecs d'Aristote: Laur. 87.7 et Laur. 81.8", *Recherches de théologie et philosophie médiévales* 44 (1997), 139 n. 9.

<sup>5</sup> For the narrative of its recovery, see Gilles G. Meersseman, "L'original de l'abrégé napolitain du cours inédit d'Albert le Grand sur l'Éthique à Nicomaque", *Revue néoscholastique de philosophie* 40 (1937), 385–397.

<sup>6</sup> See Georg Wieland, "L'émergence de l'éthique philosophique au XIIIe siècle, avec une attention spéciale pour le Guide de l'étudiant parisien", in *L'enseignement de la philosophie au XIIIe siècle: Autour du 'Guide de l'étudiant' du ms. Ripoll 109*, ed. Claude Lafleur and Joanne Carrier (Turnhout, 1997), 173; id., *Ethica-scientia practica*, 151–158; Anthony Celano, "The Understanding of the Concept of *felicitas* in the pre-1250 Commentaries on the *Ethica Nicomachea*", *Medioevo* 12 (1986), 34–35; id., "The 'finis hominis' in the Thirteenth-Century Commentaries on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 53 (1986), 28–29.

<sup>7</sup> Anonymous, *Scriptum super librum Ethicorum*, ed. Tracey, "An Early 13th-Century Commentary".

teaching, in part because some of its essential elements, such as its concept of *habitus*, had already been assimilated within Christian moral discourse.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, others were not—for example, Aristotle’s concepts of decision, the mean, and prudence. Moreover, Aristotle’s list of virtues, and above all its differentiation of moral and intellectual virtues, challenged what Georg Wieland calls the “central organizing principle” of twelfth-century moral thought: “the system of cardinal virtues”.<sup>9</sup>

Aristotle does reach some decisive conclusions about virtue in Book 1—for example, the conclusion that virtue itself is not the final goal of human action, although a kind of activity in accordance with virtue is. Still, Book 1 contains no detailed discussion of the ‘new’ essential elements. That being said, thirteenth-century commentators found occasion in it for philosophical speculation about virtue and even about the cardinal virtues. One such occasion comes in *Ethics* 1.10, when Aristotle reports and endorses Simonides’s claim that happy man is “truly good, foursquare (*tetragonus*) and blameless” (1100b22). Some Latins read the description of the *felix* as “foursquare” as an affirmation that the happy human being possesses the cardinal virtues, and indeed that, without them, no human being can be happy—that is, no human being can securely achieve the end of human action.<sup>10</sup> The line thus became an indirect validation on Aristotle’s part of the centrality of the cardinal virtues within coherent moral discourse. There is an echo of this reading in Albert the Great’s *Super Ethica* 1.12, within an objection he entertains in the question, *Utrum felix debet dici tetragonus?* Albert contends that the *felix* is indeed rightly called foursquare, but he also insists that Aristotle does not mean by this that the happy person possesses the cardinal

<sup>8</sup> See Cary J. Nederman, “Nature, Ethics, and the Doctrine of ‘Habitus’: Aristotelian Moral Psychology in the Twelfth Century”, *Traditio* 45 (1989/90), 87–110.

<sup>9</sup> Wieland, *Ethica—scientia practica*, 238–243. Cf. Jörn Müller, *Natürliche Moral und philosophische Ethik bei Albertus Magnus* (Münster, 2001), 136–140.

<sup>10</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 1.16, p. 58, attributes this reading to certain unnamed masters. Like Albert the Great, he affirms that it is a misreading: “... tetragonus sine vituperio, id est perfectus quatuor virtutibus cardinalibus, ut quidam exponunt; sed hoc non videtur esse secundum intentionem Aristotilis”. The *apparatus fontium* for this locus in Thomas’s *Sententia* lists four exemplars of this reading, one of which is from the commentary on the *Ethics* attributed to Robert Kilwardby: “Et vocat quadrangulos immobiles a bono; et hoc metaphoricè, quia, sicut corpus spericus in nulla parte quiescit, sed undique movetur quantum de se est, similiter res quadrangula firme iacet nec ex aliqua parte movetur quantum de se est. Et vocatur huiusmodi homo quadrangulus propter habitum quattuor virtutum cardinalium, secundum quas immobilis est et inflexibilis ad malum” (MSS Cambridge, Peterhouse 206, f. 239<sup>ra</sup>, and Prague, NK III.F.10, f. 9<sup>rb</sup>).

virtues.<sup>11</sup> Regrettably, the Naples Commentary breaks off just before the *tetragonus*-line.

Our Commentator discusses the range of topics that Aristotle entertains in the central chapters of Book I, beginning with what is required for the profitable study of ethics (1.4), followed by the “the three lives” (1.5), whether the human good is the Platonic form of the good (1.6), the formal characteristics of the human good (e.g., most choiceworthy, most self-sufficient, and most complete, 1.7), the “*ergon* argument” (1.7), the relation of Aristotle’s views to common beliefs about virtue, pleasure, and external goods (1.8), whether happiness is a gift of the gods (1.9), and “Solon’s dilemma” (1.10). His discussion of these subjects comes within eleven lectures (*lectiones*). Most begin with what our Commentator calls Aristotle’s *sententia in generali*: typically a 5–6 sentence articulation of the main subject of the relevant unit of Aristotle’s text, which endeavors to connect it with the main subject of the preceding lecture. Next comes a *divisio* outlining the text and defending its orderliness, followed by the *sententia in speciali*, which commonly rewrites particular arguments in the text in a syllogistic form. In last place come the *questiones*.<sup>12</sup> Because our Commentator’s *questiones* are often occasioned by prospective conflicts that he perceives between Aristotle’s positions and those of other authorities, they are the focus of our study. What we may glean from them is limited by the brevity and, in some places, obscurity of our author’s reasoning as well as our ignorance of his identity and lack of other works by him. Our approach will be in the first instance to report his arguments, then to observe what we can about their interest or significance.

The questions in our Commentator’s second lecture are an instructive place to begin. He raises three, all of which are inspired by Aristotle’s discussion in *Ethics* 1.5 of the three lives. The first is most general: What is life? He asks it because he reads Aristotle to claim that happiness follows from some kind of life. The entire *quaestio* consists of two sentences; the first poses the question and the second replies to it. No rival definitions are considered and no arguments or authorities are offered to buttress the Commentator’s own solution. He defines life as a

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<sup>11</sup> Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 1.12 (75), p. 67.

<sup>12</sup> For discussion of this genre, see Olga Weijers, “Un type de commentaire particulier à la faculté des arts: La *sententia cum questionibus*”, in *La tradition vive: Mélanges d’histoire des textes en l’honneur de Louis Holtz*, ed. Pierre Lardet (Turnhout, 2003), 211–213.

kind of “actuality diffused throughout a living being”, and emphasizes that life admits of priority and posteriority, of more and less.<sup>13</sup>

The second question follows up on this idea by asking whether the three lives that he reads Aristotle to profile—the lives of the voluptuary, the citizen, and the contemplative<sup>14</sup>—are caused by distinct powers of soul. Aristotle’s *De anima*, he notes, speaks of human life in four different senses: a human being lives, in one sense, insofar as he grows, in another sense insofar as he feels, in another sense insofar as he reasons, and in still another sense insofar as he understands. Each of these levels of living corresponds to different powers of the soul: the vegetative, concupiscible, rational, and intellectual, respectively. Our Commentator asserts that the voluptuary lives life at the level of the concupiscible power, the citizen at the level of the rational power, and the contemplative at the level of the intellectual power.<sup>15</sup>

The third question asks whether happiness follows from one of these lives. Interestingly, our Commentator argues that it does not and cannot. This is the first of several places where he reads Aristotle to affirm that happiness is not possible on earth. Any life that is laborious and painful necessarily lacks happiness, he argues, since happiness is nothing other than the pleasure that attends the attainment of perfection or the full actualization of one’s potentiality, and a life containing effort and pain has not attained perfection. Our Commentator argues that

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<sup>13</sup> *Scriptum super librum Ethicorum*, p. 30: “Sed primo queritur quid sit uita. Et est dicendum quod uita est ductio uiuentis in tempore, siue actus diffusus per totum secundum prius et posterius, et secundum magis et minus”.

<sup>14</sup> The Naples Commentator does not include the life devoted to riches (*diuitiae*) in this list; perhaps he is following suggestions in Aristotle’s text that it differs in kind from the other three (cf. *EN* 1095b18 and *EN* 1096a6–11). He reads Aristotle to advance two arguments against the thesis that happiness consists in riches: “Postea probat quod diuitie non sunt ipsa felicitas, et hoc duobus argumentis. Primum tale est: Nullus uiolentus est felix; set aliquis uiolentus est pecuniosus; ergo aliquis pecuniosus non est felix; ergo felicitas non est in diuitiis... Aliud argumentum tale est: Diuitie non queruntur quia bonum; set felicitas queritur quia bonum; ergo felicitas non est in diuitiis. Quod autem diuitie non querantur quia bonum probat, quia quod queritur propter aliud non est simpliciter bonum, set utile tantum; diuitie queruntur propter aliud; ergo non sunt simpliciter bonum set utile; ergo cum non sint simpliciter bonum, non sunt felicitas” (ibid.).

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* p. 31: “Et est dicendum quod iste tres uite sunt secundum tres uirtutes anime, scilicet secundum intelligentiam, rationalem, et concupiscibilem. Nam intellectus speculatiuus est inquisitor ueri et pure bonitatis, et talis inquisitio... est etiam uita contemplatiua... Secundum autem uirtutem rationalem... et hoc secundum (quod) concupiscibilis et irascibilis trahuntur in consequentiam eius, est uita ciuilis... Secundum autem uirtutem concupiscibilem... est uita uoluptuosa”.

earthly life is laborious and painful on the grounds that labor and pain arise in any living thing which possesses within itself some power (*virtus*) that “prohibits it from pursuing its natural inclination”, and that the power of *sensualitas* in the human soul prohibits human beings on earth in just this way. In heaven, he adds, human beings are no longer held back from pursuing their natural inclinations; it is for this reason the only place where they can experience the highest happiness.<sup>16</sup>

Our Commentator’s claim that the human beings attain the highest happiness (*summa felicitas*) only in heaven is remarkable. It can be taken to illustrate a misreading of Aristotle’s text of the sort that René-Antoine Gauthier claims is representative of early Latin academics and is rooted in a reading of Augustine.<sup>17</sup> Aristotle’s account of happiness is undoubtedly an account of happiness in this life, and if our Commentator here suggests that it is not, he surely misreads Aristotle. In modifying *felicitas* with *summa*, our Commentator anticipates the distinction that later ‘Christianizing’ commentators such as Thomas Aquinas will make between perfect and imperfect happiness.<sup>18</sup> According to Gauthier, Thomas’s use of such distinctions had immense historical impact: it encouraged Latin Christians to believe, falsely, that Aristotle’s moral teaching is largely compatible with Christian moral teaching. In so doing, Thomas served to “mask” the “harmfulness” (“nocivité”)

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.: “Postea queritur utrum felicitas sit secundum aliquam istarum uitarum. Et uidetur quod non, quod probatur hoc modo: In ⟨omnibus, in quibus⟩ est uita cum labore et pena, illa priuatur a sua perfectione, nam secundum modum laboris et pene, priuatur delectatio, quare et perfectio, nam perfectio nichil aliud est nisi delectatio coniunctionis potentie cum suo actu; set in omnibus uiuentibus est uita cum labore et pena; ergo omnia que uiuunt priuantur sua perfectione; set felicitas est secundum propriam perfectionem, que acquiritur secundum propriam uirtutem; ergo in hiis in quibus est priuatio perfectionis, non est felicitas”.

<sup>17</sup> René-Antoine Gauthier, “Le cours sur l’*Éthica* nova d’un maître ès arts de Paris (1235–1240)”, *Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 42 (1975), 78 and *passim*. Cf. id., “Arnoul de Provence et la doctrine de *fronesis*, vertu mystique suprême”, *Revue du moyen âge latin* 19 (1963), 129–170; Wieland, *Ethica-scientia practica*, 140–142; Anthony Celano, “The End of Practical Wisdom: Ethics as Science in the Thirteenth Century”, *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 33 (1995), 229–230.

<sup>18</sup> For a learned exposition of Thomas’s teaching, see Anthony Celano, “The Concept of Worldly Beatitude in the Writings of Thomas Aquinas”, *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 25 (1987), 215–226. Some pre-1250 commentators make analogous distinctions; Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem*, for example, distinguishes *felicitas creata* from *felicitas increata*. See Celano, “The Understanding of the Concept of *felicitas*”, 41. For a recent analysis of the treatment in another commentary, see Iacopo Costa, “La dottrina della felicità nel ‘Commento del Vaticano’ all’*Ética Nicomachea*”, in *Le felicità nel medioevo*, ed. Maria Bettetini and Francesco D. Paparella (Louvain-la-Neuve, 2005), 325–353.

of Aristotle's teaching, and to carry forward the invidious "enterprise de Christianisation" of Aristotle's moral theory begun by his teacher Albert the Great.<sup>19</sup> Our Commentator for his part seems genuinely convinced that Aristotle himself denies the possibility of happiness in this life—that the happiness of which Aristotle speaks, in order to possess the completeness that Aristotle ascribes to it as an end, must lie in the afterlife.

The line of argument in his second lecture about labor and frustrated natural inclinations leads to some speculation in the third lecture about the happiness of heavenly beings (*superiora*). Our Commentator asks whether heavenly beings have souls. If they do not, he observes, we should not affirm that heavenly beings actually live, and by extension, we should not affirm that genuine happiness follows from a certain way of living or life (since such beings are surely happy). He concludes that heavenly beings do indeed have souls, and proceeds to discuss the motions that are proper to them. In doing so, he is careful to reconcile his account of the motions of heavenly bodies with an authority from Aristotle's *De caelo et mundo*.<sup>20</sup> This effort at reconciliation confirms the impression that speculation about the happiness of heavenly beings is, for our Commentator, a subject concerning which inferences can legitimately be drawn from Aristotle's *Ethics*—and not, as it appears to us, one fundamentally foreign to it.<sup>21</sup>

Our Commentator devotes several questions to Aristotle's critique in *Ethics* 1.6 of Plato's *idea boni*. He has doubts, for example, about Aristotle's thesis that it is impossible for there to be a common idea of entities which admit of priority and posteriority, such as goods and numbers.<sup>22</sup> He overcomes these and other doubts, however, and indeed

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<sup>19</sup> René-Antoine Gauthier, "Trois commentaires 'averroïstes' sur l'Éthique à Nicomaque", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 16 (1947–1948), 246, 269 and *passim*.

<sup>20</sup> *Scriptum super librum Ethicorum*, p. 32: "Set quia diximus superiora uiuere, et sic uidemur dicere quod habeant animam, probamus quod superiora animam habeant. Et probatur hoc modo: Motus supercelestium non est uiolentus... neque est a natura ... Ergo motus ille est ab anima... Et si obiciatur illud quod uidetur uelle Aristoteles In Celo et mundo, quod motus ille non sit ab anima, dicendum est quod Aristoteles ita intellegit quod motus non sit ab anima, hec est perpetuitas etc. Immo perpetuitas motus est ab alio quod est extra".

<sup>21</sup> Gauthier, "Le cours sur l'Éthica nova", 78, labels analogous speculation in the Paris commentary as "diamétralement opposée" to the thought of Aristotle. For a critique of this claim, see Ralph McInerny, *Aquinas on Human Action: A Theory of Practice* (Washington, 1992), 161–177.

<sup>22</sup> *Scriptum super librum Ethicorum*, p. 34: "Set opponitur: Si in quibus est prius et

proceeds to supplement Aristotle's arguments on behalf of the thesis that there is no common idea of the good with several arguments of his own. Given the traditional Christian conflation of Platonic ideas with ideas in the mind of God, our Commentator's efforts to defend Aristotle's critique merit reflection.

First we will do well to profile his discussion of this subject in greater detail, since it is arguably the subject which he himself entertains with most nuance and at greatest length. If there were an *idea boni*, he claims, it would either be the first cause or something existing in the first cause or something else entirely which nonetheless exists through itself. Here he identifies the first cause with God, and "existing in the First Cause" with "existing in the mind of God". This analysis leads him to an original reason for thinking that there can be no *idea boni*, at least in this second sense, that is, in the sense of something existing in the First Cause or God. There can be no idea of the good in the mind of God, he argues, for if there were, God would act under the guidance of this exemplar. Yet this offends against God's omnipotence, since anything that acts under the guidance of something else cannot be all powerful. To posit ideas in the mind of God, he says, is to affirm that God acts under their guidance, and thereby to affirm that he is imperfect.<sup>23</sup>

By these steps our Commentator arrives at the conclusion that there are no ideas whatsoever in the mind of God. As Wieland notes, one might expect the Commentator to treat the subject of divine ideas more gingerly, given the rich discourses about them within the Christian tradition.<sup>24</sup> Here as elsewhere our Commentator evinces little knowledge of the sophisticated discussion of this subject within the Theology

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posterius, ut dicit, non est una ydea; ergo cum in quolibet predicamento, predicatio sit secundum prius et posterius; ergo in quolibet predicamento non est una ydea. Et est dicendum quod cum predicatur genus uel species de aliquo inferiori non predicat absolute rationem illius predicati, set predicat secundum aliquod commune... Vnde non est simile de predicatione secundum prius et posterius, que est in uno genere et in diuersis, nam que est in eodem predicatur secundum aliquod commune, que autem in diuersis, non".

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, pp. 35–36: "Si ergo esset una ydea, sicut dicebat Plato, aut illa ydea est per se existens aut est prima causa aut est aliquid existens in prima causa, quorum quodlibet falsum est... Dicamus ergo sic: Omne quod agitur dum agit ductu alicuius est imperfectum; set deus agitur ductu exemplaris dum agit si ponis ydeas esse in mente diuina; ergo deus est imperfectus; set nullum imperfectum est deus; ergo deus non est deus; non ergo sunt in mente diuina. Peccant ergo qui ponunt ydeas secundum istum modum".

<sup>24</sup> Wieland, *Ethica—scientia practica*, 154–155.

Faculty at Paris.<sup>25</sup> His assertion seems motivated by a firm conviction, rooted in his reading of Aristotle, that ideas or forms cannot exist separately from the matter in which they inhere; he elaborates in detail the problems that attend positing separately existing ideas or forms. As he does so, he is careful to explain that to deny the existence of Plato's separated forms is not to deny the existence of forms that have been abstracted by the agent intellect. Such abstracted forms do indeed exist, as do the enmattered forms from which they are abstracted. He attributes his distinction between abstracted forms and enmattered forms to Avicenna. Despite his polemic against the doctrine of separately existing forms, and his association of that doctrine with Plato, he makes an effort to save Plato's authority by noting that Plato himself can be read to speak of forms as Avicenna does. When he is so read, his teaching on forms is not false.<sup>26</sup>

Our Commentator offers another argument to support Aristotle's critique of the *idea boni*. It takes as its point of departure one sophisticated defense of Plato's teaching, which Aristotle himself anticipates, and which proceeds as follows: Plato's idea of the good is not intended to articulate what is common or shared or definitive of all goods, but only of a certain class of goods: namely, intrinsic or perfect goods. Those who, like Aristotle, would criticize Plato's account on the ground that it does adequately differentiate among kinds of goods must acknowledge at least this level of differentiation on Plato's part. Whereas perfect goods are intrinsically good, imperfect goods are not, although they do produce or preserve intrinsic goods.

Our Commentator considers an objection to this way of classifying goods, and more particularly, to the allied thesis that an intrinsic good is more perfectly good than a good which produces or preserves an intrinsic

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<sup>25</sup> The *Ethics*-commentaries of the period commonly evince ignorance of the technical vocabularies developed in the theology faculty, even on subjects of obvious interest such as the definition, number, and interrelation of the virtues. For documentation of this point and speculation as to its causes, see Odon Lottin, *Psychologie et morale aux XIIIe et XIIIe siècles* (Gembloux-Louvain, 1942–1960) 5: 225–235.

<sup>26</sup> *Scriptum super librum Ethicorum*, p. 38: "Et (est) dicendum quod, sicut uult Aristoteles, necessarium est ponere formas abstractas omnium rerum apud intellectum agentem, et necessarium est illas formas imprimere cum istis inferioribus. Vnde Avicenna ponebat duo genera formarum: ponebat enim formas illas abstractas et ponebat alias formas que sunt in potentia in materia... Et si hoc modo Plato intellexisset, non peccasset, set peccauit quia posuit formas abstractas et post illas ponebat uniuersalia, quia ex hoc sequuntur multa inconuenientia, sicut Aristoteles probat hic et in multis aliis libris".



sic good. Just as a cause is better than what is caused, the objection contends, a good which produces or preserves an intrinsic good is better than that good. So it would seem that these putatively lesser goods are actually more perfectly good, and as such ought to be the basis for any idea of the good. The reply to this argument distinguishes two kinds of producers of intrinsic goods: one producer of intrinsic goods is superior to what it produces, the other is inferior to what it produces. God, the eternal mover, is the first kind of producer.<sup>27</sup> The twists and turns of the argumentation may raise questions about its implications, but what the solution intends to offer is neither more nor less than a rationale for believing that it is meaningful to distinguish intrinsic goods from goods productive or preservative of them, and that the former goods are indeed more perfectly good than the latter.

Our Commentator's efforts to defend and extend Aristotle's critique of the *idea boni* may not illumine in any patent way his understanding of Aristotelian *virtus*. What is most noteworthy about them is the interest they evince in defending Aristotle's critique, even in places where such defense raises theological difficulty. Nevertheless, our Commentator does not defend Aristotle unqualifiedly. In at least one place, he shows a willingness to criticize him, albeit in a very tempered way. The first question in the fourth lecture takes as its point of departure Aristotle's claim that it belongs to the art of politics (*ars civilis*) to determine what the ultimate end of all human action is. Our Commentator notes that although Aristotle asserts in his text that there is one ultimate end of human action, he does not substantiate this claim.<sup>28</sup> 'Criticism' may seem too sharp a word for an observation of this kind. However, the word seems justified, among other reasons, because of the great emphasis our Commentator places on the otherwise unfailing orderliness of Aristotle's argumentation. Why he dares to signal an infelicity in Aristotle's claims about the authority of politics, and not elsewhere (assuming he perceives others), is not clear. Perhaps it reflects some mis-

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 39: "Item opponitur bona que sunt factiua et custoditiua bonorum, que sunt per se (et) sunt causa eorum quorum sunt factiua; set causa nobilior et melior est suo causato; ergo bona factiua etc. magis debent dici bona quam quorum sunt factiua; ergo hec sunt per se bona que sunt factiua... Et (est) dicendum quod dupliciter dicitur factium bonum: Quoddam est factium boni ex intentione, et omne tale de necessitate est imperfectum... Alio modo dicitur factium boni quod melius est de necessitate, quia sua essentia nullo indiget. Et secundum hoc est unum solum factium boni, scilicet motor eternus, id est deus".

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 42: "Set queratur de hoc utrum finis possit esse determinatus unius cuiuslibet artis—an sit unus finis omnium, sicut dicit in lictera set non probat".

giving on our Commentator's part about hard claims on behalf of the authority of philosophy in moral matters—a recognition of theology's authority in such matters. If it does, we find no evidence of such mis-giving elsewhere in the Commentary.

As it turns out, although Aristotle fails to establish that there is one ultimate end of human action in the *Ethics*, our Commentator finds the elements for a proof in Aristotle's *Physics*. In *Physics* 2.2 Aristotle notes that practitioners of an art that concerns some particular product need to consider, up to a point, the form, matter, and end of their production. The practitioner of medicine, for example, considers up to a point the end of his art (health) as well as its matter (the humors). So too, the builder considers the end of his art (a house) as well as its matter (stones). Now, the art of politics shares in all other arts, insofar as it ordains their place in the city. It establishes that order, moreover, in light of a determinate end. In a manner of speaking, then, all arts are for the sake of the art of politics—i.e., all are ordered to the end it seeks. Insofar as the art of politics has a single end, there is indeed one ultimate end to human action—the one sought within the art of politics.<sup>29</sup>

Having addressed the question about which discipline has the authority to determine moral matters, our Commentator next considers whether moral matters actually admit of determination. As he puts it, if art concerns what is always or frequently the case, how can there be an art of politics, since what it concerns—human action—admits of so much variation?<sup>30</sup> His answer distinguishes the principles underlying actions from actions themselves; because principles do not vary as actions do, they can be known as actions cannot.<sup>31</sup> Our Commentator's

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.: “Et est dicendum quod, sicut probat Aristoteles in secundo (Physice), omnis ars que est de aliquo artificio speciali, necesse est quod consideret formam et finem et materiam, et hoc usque quid, id est usque ad aliquem terminum, ut medici est considerare sanitatem et humores, et fabricatoris est considerare formam et finem domus et materiam, ut lapides etc., et hoc usque ad terminum. Si ergo est aliqua ars que sit communis ad omnes artes, sicut est ciuilis ad artes speculatiuas et operatiuas, ipsa enim preordinat, ut dictum est, omnes. Necesse est quod huius sit aliquis finis determinatus, et cum omnes artes sint quodammodo propter istam. Necesse est etiam quod fines omnium aliorum sint propter finem huius, et ita oportet quod omnium operationum sit finis unus”.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.: “Item omnis ars est eorum que sunt semper aut frequenter; set istud bonum debet cognosci, ut dictum est, per operabilia et sensibilia, que neque semper neque ut frequenter sunt; ergo non deberet certificare summum bonum in comparatione ad artem”.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 43: “Et est dicendum quod cum ars duplicem habeat comparationem:

distinction between contingent actions and the invariant principles that underlie them resembles the distinction in the Prologue to Albert's *Super Ethica*, between particular actions and their underlying *rationes* and *intentiones*.<sup>32</sup> One difference is that whereas Albert makes the distinction in order to defend the notion that *scientia moralis* is possible, our Commentator makes it to defend the notion that *ars ciuilis* is possible. For what it is worth, he nowhere uses the words *scientia moralis* or *ethica* in our text.

These questions about the *ars ciuilis* are followed by questions about the properties (*condiciones*) of the ultimate end: i.e., that is perfect, most choiceworthy, and most self-sufficient. In these questions, as in most others, our Commentator does not endeavor to reconcile Aristotelian and Christian doctrines but rather to show the consistency of Aristotle's deliverances within the *Ethics*. He wonders how the ultimate end can be most choiceworthy. After all, anything that is properly chosen is chosen as the result of deliberation. However, Aristotle says in *Ethics* 3 that we do not deliberate about ends. Thus, because the ultimate end is an end, we do not deliberate about it. Yet insofar as we do not deliberate about it, we do not choose it, and what is never chosen cannot be most choiceworthy. Our Commentator's solution distinguishes the comparison of a means to its end from the comparison of ends among themselves. Once we aim at some end, we do not deliberate about it, but only about the means to it, and we cannot meaningfully choose anything about which we have not deliberated. However, before we aim at ends, he says, we do "compare ends among themselves". At this stage in the process, there is indeed deliberation about ends, and so choice as well.<sup>33</sup>

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unam ad principia, secundum quod dicitur collectiua principiorum etc., et secundum hoc est eorum que semper sunt uel frequenter. Habet etiam aliam comparationem ad ea secundum que sunt operationes secundum artem uel que sunt singularia, nam operationes in singularibus sunt. Et secundum hoc ars non est eorum, que semper neque frequenter (sunt), set contingentium et eorum que per nos fieri possunt".

<sup>32</sup> Albert the Great, *Super Ethica*, Prolog. (2), pp. 1–2.

<sup>33</sup> *Scriptum super librum Ethicorum*, p. 43: "Item eligibile non est condicio nisi eorum quorum est consilium; set consilium non est de fine, ut dicit in Tertio; ergo eligibile non est condicio finis, set eorum que sunt ad finem quorum est et consilium. Male ergo dicit summum bonum eligibile cum sit finis... Preterea dicit ipse quod uoluntas est finis, set electio eorum que sunt ad finem, unde finis est obiectum uoluntatis; set ea que sunt ad finem sunt obiectum electionis; igitur eligere non est condicio ipsius finis... Item non est electio nisi quando dubitamus de aliquibus que sunt propter aliud quod illorum est utilius ad illud, et tunc cadit electio super illud quod uidetur ad illud utilius quando consiliamus. Cum igitur non sit finis talis, eius non erit electio... Et est dicendum quod

The thesis that the *bonum humanum* is most choiceworthy raises another puzzle: How can Aristotle affirm that happiness is the most choiceworthy end? In order for this to be the case, there have to be multiple choiceworthy ends, and for this to be so, he contends, there have to be multiple perfect ends. Yet to affirm that happiness is the “most perfect” among perfect ends is meaningless, since what is perfect is what is complete, and what is complete is what lacks nothing. What can be more perfect than what lacks nothing? No perfect thing, it appears, can surpass another in perfection. Our Commentator argues in reply that one perfect thing can indeed surpass another in perfection. Invoking Boethius, he distinguishes what is perfect in the sense of lacking nothing it should possess from what possesses all that it should possess in a superabundant way.<sup>34</sup> This latter class of perfect goods is indeed more perfect, and the sign of its greater perfection is that its perfection flows from it over all things. The first cause is perfect in this way, and so is happiness, according to Boethius.<sup>35</sup>

Our Commentator’s defense of the claims that the human good is most perfect and choiceworthy, informative as they are about his interests and approach, nevertheless make no reference to *virtus*. By contrast, the concept figures prominently in our Commentator’s next lecture, where he tackles the so-called *ergon* argument. On his reading, that argument maintains that the human good is acquired through an

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secundum quod finis comparatur ad ea que sunt ad finem, nullo modo est electio ipsius finis, quia non est consilium de fine set eorum que sunt ad finem. Et electio non est nisi eorum quorum est consilium. Set secundum quod fines comparantur inter se, bene est consilium de fine. Vnde finis non dicitur eligibilis in comparatione ad ea que sunt ad ipsum, set in comparatione ad alios fines”.

<sup>34</sup> The distinction our Commentator attributes to Boethius foregrounds an ambiguity of the Latin word *perfectus*—an ambiguity it shares with the Greek word in Aristotle’s *Ethics* it is used to translate, *teleios*: each can mean ‘complete’ and/or ‘perfect’.

<sup>35</sup> *Scriptum super librum Ethicorum*, pp. 43–44: “Item completum et perfectum idem sunt; set completo nichil est completius, quia si aliquid deesset, esset ens diminutum; ergo si aliquid est perfectum, nichil est perfectius... Et est dicendum quod perfectum dupliciter dicitur. Vno modo dicitur perfectum cui acquisitum est esse quod debet habere non exultans neque superhabundans, et hoc est perfectum et sibi soli sufficiens. Et est perfectum cui acquisitum est esse quod debet habere superhabundans et exultans, et hoc dicitur plusquam perfectum. Et hoc modo prima causa dicitur perfectum, et hec est felicitas secundum Boethius. Et istud dicitur perfectissimum, quia habet esse quod debet habere et exultat et influit super alia ex sua essentia... Secundum ergo quod dicitur perfectum secundo modo, nichil est perfectius. Set secundum quod dicitur perfectum primo modo, dicitur prima intelligentia perfectum, quia licet habeat esse quod debet habere, tamen non est exultans etc”.

act of the intellect, which is to say, an act of the power (*virtus*) that is proper to human beings as human beings. His first question considers whether the human good may be acquired in a different way: namely, through the practice of mechanical arts. After all, human beings alone practice such arts, and they do so by means of a power (*virtus*) that they do not share with other beings. If the human good is acquired, as Aristotle would have it, through the exercise of a power that is peculiar to human beings, it seems reasonable to suppose that it is also acquired through the practice of the mechanical arts. The solution argues that the human good cannot be acquired through the practice of mechanical arts because the good acquired through these arts is not one that is achieved through the act of a power that belongs to human beings as human beings. It is rather through the act of the animal power of the human soul—one sign that this is the case is that the mechanical arts require bodily organs for their exercise, and properly human activity requires no bodily organ.<sup>36</sup>

There follows a detailed discussion of the way Aristotle himself seems to affirm that some substances impress themselves upon others: the intelligences upon the rational soul, the rational soul upon the sensitive and imaginative soul, and the sensitive and imaginative soul upon the vegetative soul, and the vegetative soul upon nature. It is in the course of the presentation and defense of this proposition that our Commentator affirms for the first time that happiness consists in a “joining” (*continuatio*) of the human being with the intelligences. This joining (*continuatio*) is possible for a human being only when his intellect has been freed from all potency, which is to say, that it is understanding in act, and understands, moreover, by means of its own essence. Happiness, he continues, is ultimate perfection. Ultimate perfection consists in the connection (*coniunctio*) of potency to act, which is inherently pleasant. If the potency for understanding can be connected with the act of understanding, then the liberation of human intellect from all potency

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<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 45–46: “Set queritur de hoc quod dicit quod bonum hominis non acquiritur secundum artes mechanicas. Nam si bonum cuiuslibet perficitur secundum propriam uirtutem, ut dicit, propria autem uirtus est in qua non communicat cum aliis. Cum secundum artes mecanicas non communicet cum aliis, ergo secundum artes mechanicas erit propria uirtus hominis. . . . Et est dicendum quod ideo dicit quod bonum hominis non acquiritur secundum istas artes, quia bonum istarum artium non perficitur secundum actum uirtutis, que est hominis inquantum homo, set secundum actum uirtutis animalis, que uirtus existit in organis”.

is indeed possible, and human perfection consists in this. Happiness must of necessity be that connection.<sup>37</sup>

The nature of the union or *conjunctio* with transcendent *felicitas* became a major preoccupation of Parisian arts masters at the end of the thirteenth century.<sup>38</sup> Georg Wieland and Anthony Celano have noted Avicenna's influence upon our Commentator's conception of Aristotelian *felicitas*. His claim that it consists in a *continuatio* and *coniunctio* with the intelligences seeks to reinforce the conclusion of his earlier argument from frustrated natural inclinations: it is not possible for human beings to be happy in this life. However far this view may be from that of the historical Aristotle, it remains central to our Commentator's reading. It is tempting to regard him and the other early Latin *Ethics*-commentators as contributors to a larger moral-philosophical project: that of endeavoring to conceptualize a coherent virtue ethics inspired by Aristotle and yet premised on certain non-Aristotelian assumptions, chief among which is the inattainability of happiness *in hac vita*.

Our Commentator would likely not have recognized himself in such a description. His task was not to develop an independent moral theory, but to clarify Aristotle's teachings, and to do so, moreover, with a charity and sympathy that finds explanation and justification for any apparent defect. In his seventh lecture, he notes an apparent contradiction on Aristotle's part. In his critique of the Platonic *idea boni*, Aristotle claims that no good is better than another simply because it is good longer, just as no white thing is whiter than another because it is white longer. Now, in discussing the way that happiness is acquired, Aristotle suggests that the highest good is better than a good acquired in a single day. This seems to support the notion that goods are better insofar as they remain good longer. If many surfaces are white, he argues, it does not follow that the whiteness within them is many; whiteness

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 46: "Et est sciendum quod uidetur Aristoteles hic innuere quod ipse uult quod sit impressio unius substantie in aliam, ut intelligentie in animam rationalem, anime autem rationalis in sensibilem uel ymaginatuam, ymaginatie in uegetabilem, et uegetabilis in naturam... Et cum intellectus unus sit in uegetatiua et ymaginatiua, et in ymaginatiua sit perfectius, erit illius intellectus impressio ab ymaginatiua in uegetatiua".

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Luca Bianchi, *Il vescovo e i filosofi: La condanna parigina del 1277 e l'evoluzione dell'aristotelismo scolastico* (Bergamo, 1990), 149–196; Alain de Libera, "Averroisme éthique et philosophie mystique: De la félicité intellectuelle à la vie bienheureuse", in *Filosofia e teologia nel trecento: Studio in ricordo di Eugenio Randi*, ed. Luca Bianchi (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1994), 34–56.

does not belong to the category of quantity, and cannot exceed its limits. To speak of greater and lesser goods seems guilty of a similar category error.<sup>39</sup> Our Commentator replies by contrasting two hot agents. If these are alike in all respects—for example, they are equally hot—with the only difference being that one is hot longer than the other, there is a sense in which that one hot agent is nevertheless hotter than the other: namely, insofar as it makes a greater impression (*impressio*) over time on what it heats. A good which it takes longer to acquire or generate can be a better good, not because of this longer duration as such, but because a good so acquired will last longer, and in lasting longer, will make a “more profound and vehement impression” on its subject. This line of analysis provides, he thinks, one reason for believing that happiness is indeed a very great good, and that the only goods better than it are those that have always been and will always remain good.<sup>40</sup> Whatever we make of this line of analysis, it seems to furnish our Commentator with greater clarity about what is surely no small problem for virtue ethicists: that of ranking and ordering goods.

He makes similar progress later in evaluating the thesis that goods of the soul are more important for acquiring happiness than other kinds of goods. The question is of interest, among other reasons, because he understands virtue to be the soul’s good *par excellence*. One reason for denying the thesis is that goods of the soul are perfections of the soul such as actively knowing and understanding, and such perfections are drawn from potency into act by external goods. Thus, insofar as goods of the soul depend on external goods in this way, external goods are better than goods of the soul. Just as the perfection of the nutritive power of soul requires nutriment, and sensation sense objects, the perfection of human powers of knowing and understanding requires

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<sup>39</sup> *Scriptum super librum Ethicorum*, p. 49: “Set opponitur unum, quia hic uidetur sibi contradicere. Dixit enim superius quod non dicitur unum bonum magis quam alium eo quod magis duret, sicut non dicitur albius quod diuturnius eo quod una die. Et hic dicit quod non potest esse summum bonum quod est maius omnibus per unam diem neque per unum tempus, et ex hoc dicit quod sit magis bonum quod magis durat”.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*: “Cum igitur dicitur aliquid magis bonum, ista maioritas aut erit ex parte quantitatis subiecti in quo est bonum aut erit respectu temporis acquisitionis uel generationis boni, eo quod sit maius tempus acquisitionis unius quam alterius. Set respectu quantitatis subiecti in quo est bonum, non est illa maioritas, quia tunc bonus equus esset melior bono homine. Hoc autem falsum est. Relinquitur ergo quod sit illa maioritas respectu temporis acquisitionis uel generationis boni, eo quod magis duret, cuius contrarium primo dictum est”.

external objects.<sup>41</sup> In fact, as Aristotle explains in *De somno et vigilia*, there is no act of understanding without phantasms, and phantasms are drawn from sense impressions. Our Commentator invokes Averroes to resolve the puzzle about goods of the soul and external goods. On Averroes's authority, he argues that the objects of sensation do not suffice to draw the intellect from potency into act; the light of the agent intellect is also required. Just as an object of vision is not visible without the light of the sun, objects of knowledge and understanding are not visible without the light of the agent intellect.<sup>42</sup> The implication is that goods of the soul are not as dependent upon external goods as the objector imagines, and that hence are more important for obtaining happiness. At any rate, a principle for the ranking of goods emerges with new clarity: goods that do not depend on others for their being good are better than those that do.

In reporting Averroes's views about knowledge and understanding, the Commentator pauses to observe that Plato's teaching about recollection (*reminiscentia*) is false; it is not true that the human soul knows all thing in the moment of its creation.<sup>43</sup> It is interesting to note the grounds that are named for believing that this view is false: Plato's teaching is not false, say, because it is *contra fidem*. Instead it is false because it is incompatible with the account of the agent intellect's role in understanding which the Commentator has just sketched. Insofar as the doctrine of recollection is wed to the doctrine of the preexistence of human souls and hence to the denial of their special creation by God, it is presumably a doctrine which a well-informed Christian ought to deny. Our Commentator, for his part, denies recollection because he

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., pp. 53–54: “Set queritur de hoc quod dicit quod bona anime sunt principaliora aliis. Videtur mentiri, nam omne illud per quod ducitur aliquid de potentia ad actum est melius et principalius, eo quod ducitur; set omnes perfectiones anime, ut scire et intelligere actu, quae sunt bona anime, trahuntur de potentia ad actum per bona extrinseca, quod probatur; ergo bona extrinseca sunt meliora quam bona anime”.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., pp. 54–55: “Et (est) dicendum quod, sicut dicit Averrois, sicut se habet lux ad visum, ita se habet omnino intellectus agens ad intellectum materialem uel possibilem, nam quemadmodum ad hoc, quod sit visus in actu non solum exigitur extractio coloris mediante luce set oportet quod sit incidentia lucis”.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 55: “Nec est uerum quod dixit Plato, quod anima sciret omnia in sui creatione, unde suum scire non erat nisi reminisci, nam reminiscentia non est nisi reuersio in eandem potentiam. Set constat quod ea que scimus sunt in intellectu possibili, set si primo fuerunt in anima, fuerunt in intellectu agente. Cum igitur non sit reuersio in eadem potentia anime, constat quod non est ibi reminiscentia”.



considers it incompatible with Aristotle's psychology, rightly understood (which here means as understood by Averroes).

Aristotle's suggestion in *Ethics* 1.9 that happiness is not a gift of the gods but rather is acquired through discipline and study scandalized many Christian commentators.<sup>44</sup> Our Commentator considers an objection to this view which contends that if happiness is indeed so acquired, the happy human being draws himself from potency into act. Yet insofar as any human being does this, he serves, impossibly, as both that which perfects and that which is perfected, as *perficiens* and *perfectum*. Our Commentator replies to the objection with two different analogies, the first of which involves a physician who heals himself. It is not insofar as he is sick that the sick physician heals, but insofar as he is a physician. It is not his sickness that moves him from sickness to health, but his medical expertise. When a person becomes happy, the powers of his soul (*virtutes animae*) move his happiness from potency into act—he does not draw himself from one state to another, rather the powers of his soul draw him there. This hard distinction between a human being and his powers of soul surely raises thorny questions about personal identity. Himself not entirely satisfied with this solution, the Commentator offers another. When someone builds a house, it is not he as builder that moves the house in potency into a house in act, but rather the form of the house that exists in the builder's mind. So too, the form of the human happiness in the mind of the *felix* moves him from potentially happy to actually happy.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Wieland, *Ethica—scientia practica*, 140–142, 197–198.

<sup>45</sup> *Scriptum super librum Ethicorum*, pp. 64–65: “Item nichil est quod se trahat de potentia in actum, quia si traheret se de potentia in actum, ergo esset in actu, quia nichil trahitur de potentia in effectum uel actum nisi per illud quod est in actu. Ergo homo qui habet felicitatem potentia non trahitur ad actum per se, quia tunc idem esset perficiens et perfectum. Tamen Aristoteles dicit quod homo acquirit ⟨felicitatem⟩ per disciplinam et studium, et non est diuinitus data... Ad hoc dicendum ⟨est⟩ quod sicut cum aliquis est medicus et egrotans et curat, non educit se de egritudine in sanitatem inquantum consideratur unus set inquantum consideratur sicut duo, non enim unde egrotans set unde medicus, ita homo secundum quod consideratur unus non potest se trahere de potentia in actum, set potest considerari sicut duo, scilicet secundum animam, prout anima est forma fixa ipsius. Et secundum hoc non trahit se de potentia in actum, immo trahitur. Et potest considerari secundum uirtutes et potentias que sunt in anima, et secundum illas et per illas trahitur de potentia in effectum. Et ita homo non trahit se de potentia in actum, unde unus set unde consideratur alius... Vel dicendum quod ex conuienti uel conuenienti fit quod est in rebus istis inferioribus, sicut domus que fit ex conuenienti, quia ex forma domus que est in anima alicuius uel ex consequenti quod est ad minus apud causas agentis. Vnde forma domus que est in anima est causa efficiens trahens domum de potentia in actum, et non ille qui operatur.

It is unusual for our Commentator to defend Aristotle's teaching in two distinct ways. By contrast, Albert the Great has many occasions to use the *Dicendum quod... Vel dicendum quod*-construction in his *Super Ethica*, which is admittedly a much, much longer work. Our Commentator's reply may signal recognition on his part of the theological sensitivities of his Christian audience. After all, the Aristotelian dictum that drives the question is "that human beings acquire [happiness] through discipline and study, and it is not *divinitus data*". His introduction of this dictum is one of few places where the Naples Commentator calls the Philosopher by name: "*Aristoteles* dicit quod homo acquirit [felicitem] per disciplinam et studium, et non est *divinitus data*".<sup>46</sup> The Commentator may provide two solutions in order to prevent himself from being identified with any one defense of the explosive claim that God does not give happiness to human beings, but they acquire it by themselves. As with his discussion of the authority of *ars civilis*, we find here further indication of concern on our Commentator's part as to how Aristotle's teaching will be received by a Christian audience.

The questions we have surveyed in the Naples Commentary display an approach to Aristotle's *Ethics* characteristic of its pre-1250 readers in the Faculty of Arts at Paris. Our Commentator approaches the text broad-mindedly and systematically, endeavoring to reconcile Aristotle's determinations in the *Ethics* with those in his cosmological and psychological writings, with the help of intellectual tools furnished by Boethius, Avicenna, and Averroes. His questions and solutions offer at least three

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Si enim non haberet formam domus, impossibile esset quod moueretur ad aliquid operandum. Cum igitur in qualibet re que operatur, aliquid sit forma in mechanicis que mouet ipsum ad operandum quod intendit, sicut diximus de forma domus, ergo multo fortius si omnes operantur propter quid. Oportet de necessitate quod sit aliqua ultima causa que mouet, et illa cum non habeat esse in quolibet necessario erit abstracta et erit mouens secundum agens et secundum finem. Si enim forma domus haberet unum esse, unum et eadem esset mouens secundum agens et finem. Dicimus ergo quod sicut forma que est in anima est trahens domum extra de potentia in actum, sic forma ultima abstracta ab omnibus ymaginata est, que ducit hominem de potentia in effectum. Et est una et eadem forma mouens secundum agens et secundum finem in numero".

<sup>46</sup> For all their discussion and analysis of Aristotle's thought, thirteenth-century academics use the name *Aristoteles* rarely. One striking exception is Peter Olivi, who not only uses it, but does so pejoratively to reinforce the view that Aristotle was a misguided historical figure, and not a timeless source of wisdom. For an overview of Olivi's place in the thirteenth-century reception of Aristotle's thought, with some reflection as to the sense in which one may speak of him as "anti-Aristotelian", see Bonnie Kent, *Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington, 1995), 84–88.

methodological principles to guide Christian virtue ethicists.<sup>47</sup> First, sound moral philosophy eschews appeal to any one, putatively comprehensive account of the good—a Platonic *idea boni*—because no such account can ever be given.<sup>48</sup> Second, sound moral philosophy depends on sound psychology; right reasoning about the soul’s *virtutes* provides answers to questions about the ranking of goods and the nature of moral agency. Finally, moral philosophy recognizes that the authentic happiness at which human moral activity aims cannot be attained in this life.

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<sup>47</sup> For discussion of Thomas Aquinas’s knowledge and use of the pre-1250 commentaries, see Gauthier, “Praefatio”, 236\*–246\*.

<sup>48</sup> This conclusion would surely challenge Christian academics enamored of the *summa de bono*—an influential form for the organization of moral-theological discourse of the period. Works in this genre standardly begins with an analysis of good as transcendental. For some discussion of the genre, see Nicolaus Wicki, “Vie de Philippe le Chancelier”, in Philip the Chancellor, *Summa de bono*, ed. Nicolaus Wicki (Bern, 1985), 22\*–24\*. Cf. Scott MacDonald, *Being and Goodness: The Concept of the Good in Metaphysics and Philosophical Theology* (Ithaca, 1991), 13–14; Martin J. Tracey, “What Has Aristotle’s Virtue to Do with Christian Virtue? Albert the Great versus Philip the Chancellor”, in *Temperance: Aquinas and the Post-Modern World*, ed. Rollen E. Houser (Notre Dame, forthcoming).

II

ALBERT THE GREAT AND THOMAS AQUINAS



IN WAR AND PEACE: THE VIRTUE  
OF COURAGE IN THE WRITINGS OF ALBERT  
THE GREAT AND THOMAS AQUINAS

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The understanding of a virtue is in most cases highly dependent upon the cultural context in which it is embedded. This general observation is also borne out by Aristotle's notion of courage in the *Nicomachean Ethics*: "So in the strict sense of the word the courageous man will be one who is fearless in the face of an honourable death, or of some sudden threat of death; and it is in war that such situations chiefly occur" (*EN* 3.6, 1115a32–35).<sup>1</sup> The true nature of courage is revealed in the paradigm case furnished by the citizen who fights bravely in war for his city. Thus, the Aristotelian notion of courage displays a distinctively military tendency which still owes much to the Homeric tradition. In heroic societies, courage in combat is the chief quality of the aristocratic warrior whose social role is ultimately defined by the possession of this virtue in a functional sense.<sup>2</sup>

This understanding of courage is obviously bound to create some difficulties for medieval readers of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. First, the emphasis on civic warfare as the most appropriate context for courage does not sit too well with their religious and theological background. Second, Aristotle portrays courage as one of the numerous specific virtues with a rather limited range and a clear, determinate subject matter; but medieval readers will simultaneously have in mind the well established conception of courage as one of four cardinal virtues with an overarching place in everyday moral life, not only in facing death

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<sup>1</sup> Translations follow Aristotle, *The Ethics of Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. James A.K. Thomson (London, 1953 etc.).

<sup>2</sup> For this idea see Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (London, 1981), chapter 2. For the general development of the concept of courage in Greek thought and literature up to Aristotle see the comprehensive study by Etienne Smoes, *Le courage chez les Grecs, d'Homère à Aristote* (Brussels, 1995), who at p. 194 notes Aristotle's tendency towards a military notion of courage.

in battle. Can these *prima facie* conflicting ideas be reconciled in the mind of a medieval theologian?

In this essay I shall take a close look at efforts by Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas, often regarded as founders of Christian Aristotelianism, to solve these problems in their reading of Aristotle and in their own conceptions of courage. I shall draw mainly on their commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, but I shall also consider other writings in which they deal with the topic, such as the second treatise (*De fortitudine*) of Albert's *De bono*, Aquinas's *Summa theologiae* II.II.123–139, his *De virtutibus cardinalibus*, and other theological works. In the first section of the essay I shall examine how Albert and Thomas portray courage as a cardinal virtue; the understanding brought to light there will be deepened in the second section by looking at the different parts of courage as a cardinal virtue. The third section deals with the extension of the Aristotelian notion of courage to the religious sphere, while my concluding remarks consider how far the theological background of Albert and Aquinas shaped their understanding of Aristotle's conception of courage in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

*Courage as a cardinal virtue: specific  
virtue or general condition of virtuous acts?*

In his usually overlooked second commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the *Ethica*,<sup>3</sup> Albert starts his treatise on courage by drawing a distinction not found in Aristotle's text: between the four cardinal virtues, on the one hand, and the so-called adjunct virtues (*virtutes adiunctae*), on the

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<sup>3</sup> Albert produced two commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics*: the first one, *Super Ethica*, is a literal commentary with adjunct questions; it happens to be the first commentary on the complete *Nicomachean Ethics* in the Latin West after its translation by Robert Grosseteste. It was preserved in a *reportatio* by Albert's pupil Aquinas and influenced the latter very much in his own commentary; see the remarks by René-Antoine Gauthier in Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum, Opera omnia* (Rome, 1882–) 47: 235\*–257\*. While Albert's *Super Ethica* has already been published by Wilhelm Kübel in *Opera omnia* (Münster, 1951–) 14, his second commentary in the style of an Avicennian paraphrase, *Ethica*, still awaits its critical edition. Throughout this paper I will correct the uncritical edition of this text in *Opera omnia*, ed. Stephanus C.A. Borgnet (Paris, 1890–1899) 7 with the manuscript Erlangen, UB 263, ff. 1<sup>ra</sup>–234<sup>rb</sup> (hereafter E), which has proved one of the most reliable extant manuscripts; see the provisional *Prolegomena* to a future critical edition of the *Ethica* in Jörn Müller, *Natürliche Moral und philosophische Ethik bei Albertus Magnus* (Münster, 2001), 308–323. Here and in the following passages I have indicated in brackets where the Borgnet edition differs from

other. This distinction, which we will later explore in more detail, gives Albert the opportunity to comment on the term ‘cardinal’:<sup>4</sup> the cardinal virtues are the hinges (*cardines*) around which the whole moral life revolves in the sense that they organize the proper order of human passions (*ordo passionum*). Courage is responsible for dealing with passions violently induced from the outside, e.g., by the infliction of wounds and the imminent threat of death. Calling these induced passions (*passiones illatae*), Albert contrasts them with the inborn or natural passions (*passiones innatae*) handled by temperance, such as the enjoyment of food. This distinction delineates here, as well as in his *De bono*, the object of courage: it has to do with induced severe passions in a broad sense and with the fear of violent death at the hands of another in a special but at the same time primary or principal sense.<sup>5</sup> Albert does not confine himself to clarifying his own views; he also levels harsh criticism at a rival view, according to which the cardinal virtues are inherent elements of every virtue because they denote basic constituents of every virtuous action. In the case of courage the rival view highlights the firmness of virtuous action against difficulties, a firmness mentioned by Aristotle as one of the characteristics of virtue and its acts (*EN* 2.4, 1105a33).<sup>6</sup> At least in his second commentary on the *Ethics*, Albert explicitly links this view with theological sources and repudiates it as inappropriate.<sup>7</sup>

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the manuscript. My *Natürliche Moral*, pp. 325–349, contains a critical edition of *Ethica* 1.1 (Borgnet, pp. 1–16); *Ethica* 1.2 (Borgnet pp. 17–28) has been critically edited in Jörn Müller, “Der Begriff des Guten im zweiten Ethikkommentar des Albertus Magnus: Untersuchung und Edition von *Ethica*, Buch I, Traktat 2”, *Recherches de théologie et philosophie médiévales* 69 (2002), 348–370.

<sup>4</sup> For the following see Albert the Great, *Ethica* 3.2.1, pp. 234–236. Other discussions of the meaning of ‘cardinal’ in a similar vein are to be found in *Super Ethica* 3.8 (200), pp. 181–182; *De bono* 1.6.2 (121), ed. Heinrich Kühle et al., *Opera omnia* (ed Münster) 28: 80–81.

<sup>5</sup> See id., *De bono* 2.1.2 (131), p. 86: “fortitudo est circa passiones illatas ab alio sive ab extrinseco... Cum igitur passio illata in ultimo sit in periculo mortis illatae, erit fortitudo circa illam ut circa materiam principalem”.

<sup>6</sup> See id., *Ethica* 3.2.1, p. 236 (corrected with E f. 88<sup>vb</sup>): “Sunt tamen qui non ita dixerunt, opinantes quod in qualibet virtute quattuor sunt principalia, scilicet quod sit circa difficile, et quod circa bonum, et determinatio medii, et positio. Dicunt igitur quod prudentia ideo principalis est quia in [Borgnet: inest] omni virtute medium invenit et [iter. Borgnet] determinat. Fortitudo autem ideo, quia in omni virtute difficile tenet”.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*: “Haec autem a theologis [Borgnet: in theologis] dicta sunt, et non habent rationem perfectae veritatis: Non enim ex propriis, sed per metaphoram ista cardinalibus adaptantur et ideo de dictis talibus non curamus. Peccatum enim in problematibus est lectionem *transire propositum* [Borgnet: transferre propositam] et ex metaphoricis syl-



This understanding of the cardinal virtues is also a frequent target of criticism in the writings of Thomas Aquinas. In his commentary on the *Ethics* he observes that some people focus on four general modes of virtue wholly responsible for different areas of moral life. For example, every kind of firmness of mind is attributed to courage, understood as a *virtus generalis* under which other virtues fall as different species to a genus.<sup>8</sup> Aquinas is rather critical of this view, for two connected reasons. First, since these general virtues describe highly generalized dispositions, their activity is an essential element in every virtuous action; thus they do not form an adequate basis for the specification of virtues but rather result in the collapse of all virtues into one. Second, the different kinds of virtue can be better distinguished by reference to their proper object or determinate subject matter. Aquinas therefore prefers the Aristotelian understanding of courage as not a general firmness of mind but as a virtue counteracting the fear induced by deadly perils.<sup>9</sup>

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logizare.” The link with theological sources is also made clear in *De bono* 1.6.2 (121), p. 80–81: “Sunt tamen qui dicunt, quod istae quattuor ideo dicuntur cardinales, quia determinant quattuor condiciones, quae sunt in omni virtute, quae condiciones sunt scire, velle et perseverare in opere difficili et modus, qui est circa medium. Et dicunt, quod prudentia determinat scire et iustitia velle et fortitudo perseverare in difficili. Et hoc videtur habere ortum ex verbis Bernardi in II De consideratione, ubi dicit: ...” (followed by a long quotation from Bernard’s *De consideratione*); see also 2.1.2 (131), p. 87, again with a reference to Bernard. The most probable source for this conception is Philip the Chancellor, *Summa de bono*, ed. Nikolaus Wicki (Bern, 1985), 754: “Ad quod dicendum quod cardinales dicuntur triplici ratione. Una sumitur a condicionibus, alia ab intentione nominis, tertia ab actibus. Prima a conditionibus. Sicut enim dicit beatus Bernardus in libro de consideratione ad Eugenium papam, ubi facit magnum tractatum de istis virtutibus, exiguntur ad esse virtutis quatuor, scilicet scire, velle et perseverare in difficilibus et tenere medium inter superfluum et diminutum... Unde cum ibi tangatur aliqua conditio universalis in unaquaque istarum, merito dicuntur cardinales, id est principales”.

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 2.8, p. 102: “Quidam igitur istas virtutes generaliter acceperunt putantes omnem cognitionem veritatis ad prudentiam pertinere, omnem aequalitatem actionum ad iustitiam, omnem firmitatem animi ad fortitudinem, omnem refrenationem vel repressionem ad temperantiam. Et sic locuti sunt de his virtutibus Tullius et Seneca et alii quidam. Unde posuerunt has virtutes esse quasi generales et dixerunt omnes virtutes esse earum species. Sed ista virtutum distinctio non videtur esse conveniens”.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103: “Et ideo convenientius Aristoteles virtutes distinxit secundum obiecta sive secundum materias. Et secundum hoc praedictae virtutes quatuor non dicuntur principales quia sint generales, sed quia species earum accipiuntur secundum quaedam principalia... et similiter fortitudo est non circa quamlibet firmitatem, sed solum in timoribus periculorum mortis”. See also Albert, *De bono* 2.2.4 (165), p. 105: “non est differentia virtutum nisi penes materiam”.

He takes the same position when discussing these two conceptions of courage in the *Summa theologiae* and in *De virtutibus cardinalibus*.<sup>10</sup>

The two rival views of courage reveal the difference between Aristotelian and Stoic conceptions of the virtues. While Albert attributes the idea of the cardinal virtues as general conditions of all virtuous acts to some theologians,<sup>11</sup> Aquinas characterizes it as a widespread idea in theology as well as in philosophy,<sup>12</sup> and in his commentary on the *Ethics* Aquinas links it explicitly with Cicero's and Seneca's writings. This goes to the heart of the matter: the deeper idea behind this understanding of the cardinal virtues is the Stoic conception of the unity of the virtues: all the so-called specific virtues are in reality only one virtue, wisdom or knowledge (*sophia*), which expresses itself in different areas and acts. In Albert's and Aquinas's writings the theory of the general modes or conditions of virtue regularly turns up when the following questions are discussed: Are there four distinct virtues or is there really only one, so that everyone who is temperate is also necessarily prudent, courageous and just at the same time? Is there only a formal or conceptual but not a real difference between these virtues? These questions are not to be confused with the Aristotelian problem of the connection of the virtues because they emphasize the total unity and real indistinctness

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<sup>10</sup> See Aquinas, *De virtutibus cardinalibus* 1, in *Quaestiones disputatae* II, ed. P. Bazzi et al. (Turin–Rome, 1965), 815: “Haec igitur quatuor, scilicet cognitio dirigens, rectitudo, firmitas et moderatio, etsi in omnibus virtuosis actibus requirantur, singula tamen horum principalitatem quamdam habent in specialibus quibusdam materiis et actibus ... Firmitas autem praecipue laudem habet et rationem boni in illis in quibus passio maxime movet ad fugam; et hoc praecipue est in maximis periculis, quae sunt pericula mortis; et ideo ex hac parte fortitudo ponitur virtus cardinalis, per quam homo circa mortis pericula intrepide se habet”. Aquinas's preference for the Aristotelian model is explicitly stated in *Summa theologiae* I.II.61.4, *Opera omnia* 6: 397: “Quidam enim accipiunt eas, prout significant quasdam generales conditiones humani animi, quae inveniuntur in omnibus virtutibus... Alii vero, et melius, accipiunt has quatuor virtutes secundum quod determinantur ad materias speciales: unaquaeque quidem illarum ad unam materiam, in qua principaliter laudatur illa generalis conditio a qua nomen virtutis accipitur” (my italics).

<sup>11</sup> He probably has in mind Philip the Chancellor's *Summa de bono*, quoted above, n. 7. This idea is taken up by several Franciscan theologians, among them Alexander of Hales, Jean de la Rochelle and Odon Rigaud; see Odon Lottin, *Psychologie et morale aux XIIIe et XIIIe siècles* (Gembloux–Louvain, 1942–1960) 3: 174–178, with the relevant texts.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* I.II.61.3, *Opera omnia* 6: 396: “Uno modo, secundum communes rationes formales. Et secundum hoc, dicuntur principales, quasi generales ad omnes virtutes: utputa quod omnis virtus quae facit bonum in consideratione rationis, dicatur prudentia... et omnis virtus quae facit firmitatem animi contra quas-cumque passiones, dicatur fortitudo. Et sic multi loquuntur de istis virtutibus, tam sacri doctores quam etiam philosophi”.

of the cardinal virtues in a Stoic vein; Aristotle focuses on the relation of prudence to the moral virtues but regards all of them as really distinct dispositions. In his theological writings Aquinas usually discusses the alternative views of the cardinal virtues in questions about the complete unity of the virtues, i.e., in a distinctively Stoic framework adopted by many patristic writers who are quoted by Aquinas in favor of this view.<sup>13</sup>

Another Stoic inheritance is the idea that the cardinal virtues have several parts. Following Chrysippus's lead, the Stoics developed several classifications to integrate the different virtues into one hierarchical system, with knowledge/wisdom at its top, the cardinal virtues on the second level, and their respective parts on the third. This led to a classification where courage, perseverance and magnanimity formed a group of concepts with interrelations and part-whole relationships that were often debated.<sup>14</sup> Aquinas mentions in several places that the conception of the cardinal virtues as general modes or conditions has as its consequence that all the other moral virtues are contained in the cardinal virtues.<sup>15</sup> Here we see further evidence for the Stoic tendency of this model.

It is certainly true that there is a substantial difference between subsuming all virtues under the four cardinal virtues and treating the cardinal virtues as general conditions of virtue. According to the first view, patience is a species of courage, but not of the other cardinal virtues. According to the second view, patience is a virtue conditioned by all four cardinal virtues.<sup>16</sup> But it is very telling that Aquinas, who attributes to the Stoics the conception of the cardinal virtues as general conditions of every virtuous act, sees a connection between these two ideas.<sup>17</sup> This

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. the solution of *ibid.* 61.4, p. 397 (“Utrum quatuor virtutes cardinales differant ab invicem”). See also *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* III.33.11 (“Utrum omnes morales virtutes sint una virtus”), ed. Pierre F. Mandonnet and M. Ferdinand Moos (Paris, 1929–1947) 3: 1023: “Tamen advertendum, quod sancti et philosophi inveniuntur dupliciter loqui de istis virtutibus...”; *De virtutibus cardinalibus* 1 ad 1, p. 815, where Aquinas develops the two conceptions in his answer to an objection which states: “praedictae virtutes non distinguuntur ad invicem” (p. 813).

<sup>14</sup> For an instructive overview and analysis of this development in the Stoic school see René-Antoine Gauthier, *Magnanimité: L'idéal de la grandeur dans la philosophie païenne et dans la théologie chrétienne* (Paris, 1951), 144–164.

<sup>15</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* I.II.61.3, *Opera omnia* 6: 396: “Et sic aliae virtutes sub ipsis continentur”.

<sup>16</sup> I owe this observation to István Bejczy.

<sup>17</sup> See Thomas Aquinas, *De virtutibus cardinalibus* 1 ad 5, p. 816: “[S]i praedictae quatuor virtutes accipiantur secundum quod significant generales condiciones virtu-

may be a questionable conflation of philosophically distinct ideas, but I think that the heterogeneous view of the cardinal virtues as *generales conditiones virtutum* which Albert and Aquinas criticize in several texts is ultimately an inheritance from the Stoic idea of the unity of the virtues. This is evident in texts where Albert and Aquinas present Aristotle's view as having one opponent, not two.

Their preference for Aristotle's understanding of the cardinal virtues in general and courage in particular is not simply the result of taking sides dogmatically in an ancient debate; Albert and Thomas have substantive reasons which simultaneously reflect their attitude as virtue ethicists:

- (1) Both frame their notion of the cardinal virtues in general and courage in particular by pointing to Aristotle's statement in *On the Heavens*, that virtue is the ultimate state of a potency. This 'principle of the ultimate' dominates their entire discussion of courage. As a virtue, courage has to deal with the highest difficulties possible in moral life; it cannot be concerned with the fear of being robbed during one's holiday but has to refer to the ultimate danger of being faced with a violent death.<sup>18</sup> The Stoic understanding of general virtue runs the risk of diminishing the ultimate character of courage by expanding its range to fairly trivial situations.
- (2) If courage is understood as a general mode or condition of resisting difficulties in virtuous acts, it can be easily confused with temperance. As Albert explains, those who speak of courage in this way treat resistance to sensual temptation as an act of courage

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tum, secundum hoc omnes virtutes speciales de quibus Philosophus tractat in lib. Ethicorum, reducuntur ad has quatuor virtutes sicut species ad genus".

<sup>18</sup> See id., *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 3.14, p. 161: "Virtus enim determinatur secundum ultimum potentiae, ut dicitur I De caelo, et ideo oportet quod virtus fortitudinis sit circa ea qua sunt maxime terribilia, ita quod nullus magis sustineat pericula quam fortis. Inter omnia autem maxime terribile est mors. Et huius ratio est quia est terminus totius praesentis vitae et nihil post mortem videtur esse homini vel bonum vel malum de his quae pertinent ad praesentem vitam, quae nobis sunt nota, ea enim quae pertinent ad statum animarum post mortem non sunt visibilia nobis; valde autem terribile est id per quod homo perdit omnia bona quae cognoscit. Unde videtur quod fortitudo proprie sit circa timorem periculorum mortis." The passage from *De caelo* 1.11 (281a11–15) is also quoted very often in the *Summa theologiae*; see the references in Harry V. Jaffa, *Thomism and Aristotelianism: A Study of the Commentary by Thomas Aquinas on the Nicomachean Ethics* (Chicago, 1952), 70–74, who devotes a thorough analysis to this "principle of the ultimate" which he regards as "the cornerstone of the theory of virtue" (72) set forth by Aquinas. For Albert's use of this idea in the context of courage see e.g. *De bono* 2.1.1 (128) and 2.1.2 (131), pp. 85, 86.

simply because it is difficult. But this does not capture the proper sense of courage as a virtue<sup>19</sup> because it blurs the distinction from temperance, which has the pleasures of taste and touch as its objects. The task of the ethicist is precisely the distinction and not the indiscriminate mixing up of the different virtues.

Confronted with conflicting philosophical inheritances, Albert and Aquinas opt for the interpretation of the cardinal virtues (including courage) as specific virtues with a determinate subject matter, not the “Stoic” understanding of them as general conditions of virtue. Both of them defend the adequacy of the Aristotelian definition of courage.<sup>20</sup> But this does not mean that they totally discard the Stoic view of courage, as we shall see in examining their discussion of the parts of courage.

### *The parts of courage*

One possible rationale for calling the four cardinal virtues ‘principal’ is the idea that the other moral virtues can be somehow traced back to them.<sup>21</sup> Albert takes up this idea to provide an original reading of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, one used as a guiding principle of interpretation especially in his second commentary. The third book of his *Ethica* deals with the cardinal or principal virtues of courage and temperance, while

<sup>19</sup> See Albert the Great, *De bono* 2.1.2 (131), p. 87, containing a quotation from Augustine’s *De trinitate* 6.7, which again clearly points to the unity of the virtues (“Virtutes nullo modo separantur ab invicem...”).

<sup>20</sup> Aristotle does not provide a definition in the strict sense, but Albert approvingly takes up the definition given by the anonymous commentator on *EN* 3 which includes the reference to the required good aim: “Erit utique igitur fortitudo habitus in medietate quae circa timores et audacias, sufferentes faciens et periculorum et mortis boni gratia”, in *The Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle in the Latin Translation of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln (†1253)*, I: *Eustratius on Book I and the Anonymous Scholia on Books II, III and IV*, ed. H. Paul F. Mercken (Leiden, 1973), 292. Cf. Albert’s defense of the correctness of this definition in *Super Ethica* 3.11 (223), p. 197. See also id., *De bono* 1.2.1 (124), p. 82: “In Ethicis [scil. Aristotelis] autem non invenitur diffinitio fortitudinis, nisi colligatur, scilicet quod fortitudo sit circa terribilia sufferens et operans gratia boni”. Maybe the use of this formula depends on Philip the Chancellor, *Summa de bono*, p. 793, as the editor suggests in the apparatus.

<sup>21</sup> See Albert the Great, *De bono* 1.6.2 (121), p. 80: “Principales autem dicuntur istae virtutes [scil. cardinales], eo quod aliae, quae sunt in operationibus et passionibus consistentibus in medio, ad ipsas habent reductionem”.

the fourth book discusses the virtues adjoined to them.<sup>22</sup> Aquinas, by contrast, clearly acknowledges that the scheme of the cardinal virtues is rather alien to Aristotle's text and therefore shows some reservation about using it as an overall interpretative tool in his commentary on the *Ethics*,<sup>23</sup> but in his digression on the proper understanding of the cardinal virtues he also mentions the reduction of the other virtues to the principal ones.<sup>24</sup> Thus, the idea of somehow ordering all the other moral virtues towards the cardinal virtues is present in both Albert's and Aquinas's commentaries, and it is elaborated in their other writings in quite an extraordinary manner, as we will see.

The hierarchical Stoic ordering of the virtues, by which the other virtues are related to the cardinal ones, was transmitted to the thirteenth century through several intermediate sources. This transmission is full of unresolved tensions, especially in two important aspects:

- (1) What is the correct understanding of the relationship between the principal virtues and their secondary parts? Is it a genuine part-whole relationship, as Abelard's *Collationes* suggest,<sup>25</sup> or do the secondary virtues remain distinct, specific virtues in their own right?

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<sup>22</sup> See id., *Ethica* 4.1.1, p. 271: "In hoc quarto libro non de principalibus sive cardinalibus virtutibus, sed de adiunctis eis intendimus, non quidem de adiunctis omnibus, sed adiunctis fortitudini et temperantiae". See also *Super Ethica* 4.1 (250), p. 220: "Postquam determinavit de virtutibus principalibus, quae sunt circa passiones, determinat hic de adiunctis...". For the general structure of Albert's account of the natural virtues see Müller, *Natürliche Moral*, esp. 141–155.

<sup>23</sup> See Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 1.16, p. 58, where he rejects the interpretation of a passage by means of the cardinal virtues: "... sed hoc non videtur esse secundum intentionem Aristotilis, qui numquam invenitur talem enumerationem facere".

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. 2.8, p. 103: "Aliae vero virtutes sunt circa quaedam secundaria, et ideo possunt reduci ad praedictas [scil. virtutes cardinales], non sicut species ad genera, sed sicut secundariae ad principales". In the *Sententia*, Thomas generally prefers to speak of principal and secondary passions with which the different virtues are concerned. For this scheme of principal passions and its origin in the Stoic doctrine of the *pathê* see Alexander Brungs, *Metaphysik der Sinnlichkeit: Das System der Passiones Animae bei Thomas von Aquin* (Halle, 2002), 103–115. The main sources for Thomas's treatment of passions are succinctly summarized by Mark D. Jordan, "Aquinas's Construction of a Moral Account of the Passions", *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 33 (1986), 71–97.

<sup>25</sup> See Peter Abelard, *Collationes*, ed. trans. John Marenbon and Giovanni Orlandi (Oxford, 2001), 146: "Fortitudo itaque nobis duabus partibus videtur comprehendi, magnanimitate scilicet ac tolerantia".

- (2) Which of the several existent schemes is the right one? In the case of courage, there were three main contenders from ancient philosophy listing different parts of courage: *Cicero*: magnificentia, fidentia, patientia, perseverantia<sup>26</sup> *Macrobius*: magnanimitas, fiducia, securitas, magnificentia, constantia, tolerantia, firmitas<sup>27</sup> (*Pseudo-Andronicus*: eupsychia, lema, magnanimitas, virilitas, perseverantia, magnificentia, andragathia.<sup>28</sup>

How do Albert and Aquinas deal with these two problems? First, they clarify several meanings of ‘part,’ ruling out the possibility that courage has other virtues as subjective parts (*partes subiectivae*): courage is not a generic term or a genus under which the different parts of it fall as species.<sup>29</sup> Otherwise its status as a specific virtue would be jeopardized; it would have no being outside its parts and could simply be reduced to them. By consistently applying the ‘principle of the ultimate’ to courage Albert and Aquinas support the idea that it has its own subject matter and actions, namely, facing mortal dangers. Furthermore, according to Aquinas, a species-genus relationship between courage and its parts derives from the view of the cardinal virtues as general conditions of every virtuous act, which—as we have seen—is not much appreciated by him and Albert.<sup>30</sup> This negative result leaves open two other possibilities according to a well known classification developed by Aquinas in the *Summa theologiae*: the parts of courage could be potential and/or integral parts.<sup>31</sup> Most of Albert’s and Aquinas’s discussions are dom-

<sup>26</sup> Cicero, *De inventione* 2.54.163, ed. Eduard Stroebel (Leipzig, 1915), p. 149.

<sup>27</sup> Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis* 1.8.7, ed. Jakob A. Willis (Leipzig, 1963), 38.

<sup>28</sup> Pseudo-Andronicus, *Περὶ παθῶν*, ed. Anne Glibert-Thirry (Leiden, 1977), 246.

<sup>29</sup> Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 3.10 (210), p. 190: “fortitudo est specialis virtus, et ideo non habet sub se aliquas species; habet enim specialem materiam et specialem actum nec dicitur cardinalis, quia sit genus aliquarum...”; see also *Super Ethica* 2.7 (146), p. 131. For Thomas see the quotation from *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 2.8 above, n. 26. An earlier discussion of this problem with a similar result can be found in Philip the Chancellor, *Summa de bono*, pp. 823–824 (“De partibus fortitudinis, utrum sint species”).

<sup>30</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *De virtutibus cardinalibus* 1 ad 5, p. 816: “[S]i praedictae quatuor virtutes accipiantur secundum quod significant generales condiciones virtutum, secundum hoc omnes virtutes speciales de quibus Philosophus tractat in lib. Ethicorum, reducuntur ad has quatuor virtutes sicut species ad genus. Si vero accipiantur secundum quod sunt speciales virtutes circa quasdam materias principales, sic aliae reducuntur ad eas sicut secundarium ad principale”.

<sup>31</sup> *Summa theologiae* II.II.48, *Opera omnia* 8: 365: “triplex est pars: scilicet integralis, ut paries, tectum et fundamentum sunt partes domus; subiectiva, sicut bos et leo sunt partes animalis; et potentialis, sicut nutritivum et sensitivum sunt partes animae.

inated by the intention to prove that the parts of courage are themselves specific virtues, not merely conditions of every courageous act.<sup>32</sup> Thus the discussion about the status of the cardinal virtues is reiterated on a lower level, with an identical result: the parts of courage all have their own determinate subject matter and acts, which do not simply collapse into one general virtue. When they are called potential parts of courage, this simply means that they are secondary or adjunct virtues related to courage.<sup>33</sup> Albert and Thomas characterize the relationship as a participative one: the adjunct virtues generally have as their objects external perils or difficulties ranked below the ultimate danger and fear of death that distinguishes courage in the true sense of the word (*vera fortitudo*). One who possesses true courage and is therefore able to face death can easily withstand all the other minor difficulties and dangers.<sup>34</sup> In this way the adjunct virtues participate in the power of full courage, an idea which is illustrated by the underlying terminology: as the potencies of the soul are separate entities but draw on the power of the whole soul, the different adjunct virtues are *partes potentiales/potestativae*. In this precise sense true courage really is a general virtue for the adjunct ones.<sup>35</sup> While Albert seems rather critical of

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Tribus ergo modis possunt assignari partes alicui virtuti. Uno modo ad similitudinem partium integralium: ut scilicet illa dicantur esse partes virtutis alicuius quae necesse est concurrere ad actum perfectum virtutis illius... Partes autem subiectivae virtutis dicuntur species eius diversas... Partes autem potentiales alicuius virtutis dicuntur virtutes adiunctae quae ordinantur ad aliquos secundarios actus vel materias, quasi non habentes totam potentiam principalis virtutis". This distinction is prefigured in Albert's discussion of the parts of courage in *De bono* 2.2.10 (180), p. 112, where he distinguishes *partes subiectivae, integrales, and potestativae*.

<sup>32</sup> See Albert the Great, *De bono* 2.2.2 (158), p. 101: "Dicendum ad hoc, quod istae sunt partes verae fortitudinis, et sicut partes aliarum virtutum virtutes speciales, ita sunt et istae" (as solution to the question "Utrum magnificentia sit virtus secundum se vel condicio quaedam fortitudinis").

<sup>33</sup> See *Summa theologiae* II.II.48, *Opera omnia* 8: 366: "Partes autem potentiales alicuius virtutis dicuntur virtutes adiunctae quae ordinantur ad aliquos secundarios actus vel materias, quasi non habentes totam potentiam principalis virtutis".

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* 123.4, *Opera omnia* 10: 10.

<sup>35</sup> See Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 3.8 (200), pp. 180–181: "Generalis [scil. fortitudo] vero dicitur non quia sit genus aliarum virtutum, sed quia ad modum generis se habet, inquantum aliquis modus eius invenitur in quibusdam aliis virtutibus, licet non completa ratione ipsius... Et sic dicimus, quod fortitudo est virtus principalis quantum ad actum et cardinalis quantum ad materiam et generalis, inquantum participatur aliquid sui in aliis virtutibus quibusdam". Cf. Aquinas, *Scriptum super Sententias* III.33.3.3, pp. 1087–1088: "Respondeo dicendum ad primam quaestionem, quod partes quas Tullius assignat, sunt partes potentiales, inquantum participant aliquid de materia fortitudinis. Fortitudo enim, ut dicit Philosophus in III Ethic., cap. IX, proprie loquendo est



Philip the Chancellor's theory that the parts of courage could be understood as *partes integrales* (like stones are component parts of a house),<sup>36</sup> Aquinas shows more sympathy towards it. If the parts of courage are exercised in matters less pressing than death, they are only adjunct or allied virtues with their own objects; but if they are put to use against deadly perils, they are to be regarded as integral or component parts of true courage.<sup>37</sup> Aquinas does not elaborate on this theory, but the philosophical rationale behind it is certainly a fruitful one. Analyzing the different parts of courage with this idea in mind might enable us to see which elements are included in acts of true courage and thereby deepen our understanding of it.

This consideration leads us to the second problem concerning the parts of courage: which of the ancient classifications is the best one? Albert and Thomas both opt for Cicero's model, which allows them a neat and symmetrical connection with Aristotle's notion of courage: courage possesses an active or aggressive aspect (*aggredi*), which is represented by the two parts of *fidentia* and *magnificentia*, as well as a passive or suffering element (*sustinere*), which they connect with the two remaining parts of Cicero's classification: *patientia* and *perseverantia*. Furthermore, Albert and Aquinas strive very hard to harmonise the different traditional models. They do not simply discard the remaining accounts by Macrobius and (Pseudo-)Andronicus but try to integrate them into Cicero's classification, either by showing that some of the notions really point to the same thing (e.g., *magnanimitas* and *magnificentia*) or by setting up a third level on which some concepts are *partes partium* of the others.<sup>38</sup> This fairly ahistorical harmonisation is not always convincing, but

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circa pericula mortis, et maxime quae in bellicis est, quia in illis est maxime difficultas... Et quamvis principaliter fortis sit circa ista, tamen in omnibus aliis periculis et arduis etiam bene se habet et in aggrediendo et in sustinendo. Et ideo omnes virtutes in quibus consistit difficultas ex aggressionem alicuius ardui, vel ex sustinentia difficili, aliquid de fortitudinis modo participant, et ad ipsam reducuntur sicut partes potentiales ...<sup>35</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Albert the Great, *De bono* 2.2.10 (180), p. 112. For Philip's position see *Summa de bono*, p. 823.

<sup>37</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.128, *Opera omnia* 10: 52: "[S]i coarctentur [scil. partes] ad propriam materiam fortitudinis, erunt partes quasi integrales ipsius. Si autem ad quascumque materiales difficiles referantur, erunt virtutes a fortitudine distinctae, et tamen ei adiungentur sicut secundariae principali".

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* ad 6, p. 53: "[O]mnes huiusmodi partes ad quatuor principales reducuntur quas Tullius ponit". For elaborate discussions of this subject see *Scriptum super Sententias* III.33.3.3, pp. 1085-1092, and Albert the Great, *De bono* 2.2.11 (182), p. 113 ('partes partium').

it provides further proof of their attempt to illuminate and enrich their basic Aristotelian notion of courage by integrating other traditions.

At the same time, their integration of the idea of parts points to a general extension of the notion of courage in Albert and Aquinas. While they criticize courage as a general condition of every virtuous act, they allow it to designate a general firmness of mind against severe external dangers and the proper handling of the corresponding passions in this area.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, the several adjunct virtues or parts and the five semblances of courage described by Aristotle can also be called courage.<sup>40</sup> Since all of them fall short of the notion of true courage in some important respect (such as their object or the agent's motivation), courage is predicated of them in an analogical sense, i.e., with reference to the stricter Aristotelian concept which remains the focal meaning of the concept.<sup>41</sup> In Albert's writings, this analogical predication leads to several terminological distinctions that are intertwined, such as the distinction between courage in the common and proper senses of the word<sup>42</sup> as well as between a *materia communis* and a *materia propria* of courage.<sup>43</sup> But the expansion of the meaning of courage does

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<sup>39</sup> See Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 3.14, p. 160: "Importat enim fortitudo quendam animi firmitatem per quam animus stat immobilis contra periculorum timores"; see also *Summa theologiae* II.II.123.2, *Opera omnia* 10: 7, contrasting the view of courage as a condition of every virtuous act with the following understanding: "Alio modo potest accipi fortitudo secundum quod importat firmitatem animi in sustinendis et repellendis his in quibus maxime difficile est firmitatem habere, scilicet in aliquibus periculis gravis. Unde Tullius dicit in sua Rhetorica, quod *fortitudo est considerata periculorum susceptio et laborum perpessio*. Et sic fortitudo ponitur virtus specialis, utpote materiam determinatam habens".

<sup>40</sup> For these five 'semblances' of courage see *EN* 3.8 (1116a15–1117a28). Interestingly, Aquinas explicitly calls them 'potential parts' in *Scriptum super Sententias* III.33.3.3, p. 1090, while he refers to them only as *modi fortitudinis* in the *Summa* and in the *Sententia*. Albert does not describe them as parts but as 'imitations' of courage; they are twice called *virtutes adiunctae* in *Ethica* 3.2.6 and 7, pp. 242, 244, but since these two occurrences only appear in the chapter headlines (which might not have been provided by Albert himself) and not in the ongoing text I doubt the authenticity of this terminology.

<sup>41</sup> See e.g. Albert the Great, *De bono* 2.2.10 (180), p. 112: "virtutes morales sunt potestates quaedam et suae partes sunt potestativae, sicut fere est in omnibus spiritualibus totis et partibus. Partes autem illae recipiunt quidem praedicationem totius secundum rationem imperfectam...".

<sup>42</sup> See *Super Ethica* 3.8 (201), p. 181 (*fortitudo propria, fortitudo communiter accepta*).

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* (203), p. 183; see also *De bono* 2.1.1 (129), p. 85. In the same context (n. 128, p. 85) Albert mentions a threefold division of *fortitudo* (*large, stricte, strictissime*) which is probably taken over from Philip the Chancellor, *Summa de bono*, p. 796, in conjunction with p. 819.

not only concern these analogical predications of the term; it is also visible in the treatment of true courage, the Aristotelian interpretation of the concept.

*The expansion of the Aristotelian concept  
of true courage to the religious sphere*

One of the central tenets of Aristotle's notion of courage is the idea that it is concerned with death in battle and the fear connected with it (*EN* 3.6, 1115a28–30). When commenting on the rationale behind this restriction of courage to military combat, Aquinas points out that Aristotle wants to rule out natural and accidental forms of death in favour of portraying courage as facing death for a good cause: this type of death is frequently to be recognized in a warfare where the citizens fight as soldiers for the common good of their cities. But Aquinas adds that there are other examples of truly courageous acts because the Aristotelian arguments hold for every kind of death that one is ready to suffer for the good of virtue.<sup>44</sup> In discussing the same passage in the *Nicomachean Ethics* Albert emphasises that true courage always involves the readiness or willingness to die; it is manifested in a death deliberately chosen, not in situations where death happens against the agent's will. As an example he mentions the Christian martyrs who choose to die when confronted with a choice between staying true to their faith and dying and renouncing their faith and staying alive.<sup>45</sup>

The Aristotelian paradigm of courage in battle is deliberately expanded by its generalization.<sup>46</sup> True courage manifests itself in every

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<sup>44</sup> See Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 3.14, p. 161: “[N]eque etiam fortitudo est circa mortem quam quis sustinet in quocumque casu vel negotio, sicut in mari vel in aegritudine, sed circa mortem quam quis sustinet pro optimis rebus, sicut contingit cum aliquis moritur in bello propter patriae defensionem. Et eadem ratio est de quacumque alia morte quam quis sustinet propter bonum virtutis, sed specialiter facit mentionem de morte in bello, quia in tali negotio ut frequentius homines moriuntur propter bonum”.

<sup>45</sup> Albert the Great, *De bono* 2.1.2 (131), pp. 86–87: “Si vero quaeritur, quare fortitudo potius sit circa mortem illatam quam circa innatam sive naturalem, dicendum, quod circa mortem illatam est actus eligentiae et voluntatis, quia illa est in nostra voluntate, sicut fuit in voluntate martyrum mori vel non mori per hoc, quod poterant negare fidem vel non negare”.

<sup>46</sup> At the same time, Aquinas also expands the concept of *bellum* to non-military cases; see *Summa theologiae* II.II.123.5, *Opera omnia* 10: 12: “Pertinet ergo ad fortitudinem firmitatem animi praebere contra pericula mortis non solum quae imminet in bello

readiness to die for a just or good cause, be it the welfare of the city-state or the demonstration of Christian faith.<sup>47</sup> The inclusion of martyrdom seems to be the driving force behind this transformation of the Aristotelian formula, which nonetheless retains its original defining marks. This is clearly visible in Aquinas's *Summa theologiae* II.II, where the first question on courage (q. 123), which sticks fairly close to Aristotle's ideas, is immediately followed by the question *De martyrio* (q. 124). Martyrdom is not just another example of true courage but rather the paradigm example of it; it is the outstanding act of courage (*actus praecipuus fortitudinis*).<sup>48</sup> Consequently, Aquinas emphasizes that true Christian courage in the form of martyrdom necessarily involves death, not merely exile or incarceration—an idea which has been forcefully taken up by Josef Pieper.<sup>49</sup> In this way the ancient ideal of the 'beautiful death' (*bona mors*) is reformulated in Christian terms.<sup>50</sup>

At the same time, the expansion of true courage from the military background of the ancient world to the religious sphere of Christianity affects the interpretation of Aristotle's text on a subtle level. Let me give two examples of where this seems to be the case:

(1) One of the problems with Aristotle's account in *EN* 3 is the fact that courage is concerned not with one but with two passions: fear (*timor*) and confidence (*audacia*). Hence Aristotle portrays altogether four extremes surrounding this virtue, two for each of the passions. Does

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communi, sed etiam quae imminent in particulari impugnatione, quae communi nomine bellum dici potest". This general notion of war also covers the case of martyrdom: "martyres sustinent personales impugnationes propter summum bonum, quod est Deus. Ideo eorum fortitudo praecipue commendatur. Nec est extra genus fortitudinis quae est circa bellica. *Unde dicantur fortes facti in bello*" (ibid. ad 1, with reference to Heb. 11:34).

<sup>47</sup> This expansion from ordinary courage to religious courage in Aquinas's theological writings is brilliantly analysed by Lee H. Yearley, *Mencius and Aquinas: Theories of Virtue and Conceptions of Courage* (Albany, 1990), 129–143, to which the following observations owe some important insights.

<sup>48</sup> *Summa theologiae* II.II.124.1–2, *Opera omnia* 10: 27–29. Martyrdom is explicitly termed "actus praecipuus fortitudinis" in the exposition of q. 123, which provides the structure for the whole treatise on courage and its parts (qq. 123–139).

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. 124.4, p. 36: "Et ideo ad perfectam rationem martyrii requiritur quod aliquis mortem sustineat propter Christum"; Josef Pieper, "Vom Sinn der Tapferkeit", in *Werke in acht Bänden* (Hamburg, 1995–) 4: 114: "Das Martyrium ist die eigentliche und höchste Tat der Tapferkeit. Die Bereitschaft zum Martyrium ist die Wesenswurzel aller christlichen Tapferkeit. Es gibt keine christliche Tapferkeit ohne diese Bereitschaft".

<sup>50</sup> See for this ancient ideal Smoes, *Le courage chez les Grecs*, 12.

this mean that courage as a virtue does not have one mean but two of them, as some modern commentators argue?<sup>51</sup> At least each of the passions seems to be connected with a corresponding act: courage has to do with confident attacking (*aggredi*) as well as with enduring (*sustinere*) fear. Albert and Aquinas state in their commentaries as well as in their theological writings that the essence of courage is enduring, and that attacking only takes second place.<sup>52</sup> Thus courage is primarily occupied with fear and not with confidence. This idea is certainly supported by Aristotle's statement that "courage is concerned with grounds for confidence and fear, but not to the same degree with both; it is more concerned with what is fearful" (*EN* 3.9, 1117a29–30). But while this is only a passing remark in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Albert and Aquinas devote a lot of energy to defending their claim about the essential character of endurance, not only as a correct interpretation of Aristotle's text but also as the true understanding of the matter at hand.<sup>53</sup> By this emphasis they capture the difference now expressed in German by the distinction between 'Tapferkeit' as an act of endurance and 'Mut' as an act of confidence.<sup>54</sup> That their interpretation is not universally shared by medieval thinkers is borne out by Philip the Chancellor's *Summa de bono*, where he reverses the order in favour of the active component of courage.<sup>55</sup> Albert's and Aquinas's emphasis on endurance becomes completely intelligible if we bear in mind that both regard martyrdom as the paradigm act of courage. In most cases, the martyr's adherence to faith manifests itself in powerless endurance, in

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<sup>51</sup> See James O. Urmson, "Aristotle's Doctrine of the Mean", *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics*, ed. Amélie O. Rorty (Berkeley–Los Angeles–London, 1980), 169–170. For a nuanced discussion of this difficulty see David Pears, "Courage as a Mean", *ibid.* 171–187.

<sup>52</sup> Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 3.8 (201), p. 181; *Ethica* 3.2.11, p. 250; *De bono* 2.1.3 (136), p. 90 ("Unde cum Philosopho dicimus, quod principalis actus fortitudinis est sustinere difficile electum gratia boni..."); Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.123.6, *Opera omnia* 10: 15–16. See also Pieper, "Vom Sinn der Tapferkeit", 126: "[D]as Eigentliche der Tapferkeit ist nicht Angriff, nicht Selbstvertrauen und nicht Zorn, sondern Standhalten und Geduld".

<sup>53</sup> Albert invokes once more the 'principle of the ultimate' to defend this claim: *De bono* 2.1.1 (127)–(129), pp. 84–85: "tolerare magis ponit fortitudinem in summo quam aggredi... et propter hoc per tolerare diffinitur".

<sup>54</sup> For this important difference see my article "Tapferkeit", in *Neues Handbuch philosophischer Grundbegriffe*, ed. Petra Kolmer and Armin Wildfeuer, 2nd ed. (Freiburg im Breisgau, forthcoming).

<sup>55</sup> See Philip the Chancellor, *Summa de bono*, p. 806. This is remarkable because Philip shares the view that in a theological sense martyrdom is the best act of courage (*ibid.*, p. 804).

suffering the infliction of wounds and ultimately of death without any intention (or chance) of fighting back. While in military combat holding one's ground and counterattacking are often closely linked, martyrs win their battles by displaying their faith through passive endurance.<sup>56</sup>

(2) A second area where their Christian emphasis on endurance becomes obvious in Albert's and Aquinas's interpretation of Aristotle is in the importance of the pain or sadness (*tristitia*) involved in this suffering. *Tristitia* translates the Greek *lypê*, the third passion involved in Aristotle's account of courage besides fear and confidence. Fear concerns future evils and *tristitia* pains and sorrows already present; while they have the same objects, they stand in a different chronological relationship to them. Since courage is essentially endurance, it necessarily has to cope with the presence of pain.<sup>57</sup> Because of its presence, pain poses a crucial problem for Aristotle's account of courage, as he himself points out (*EN* 3.9, 1117a32–b16). Virtuous actions have to be delightful for the agent; otherwise he is not really virtuous but only self-controlled; but wounds and death certainly cause pain and therefore cannot be seen as wholly delightful. Does not this fact jeopardize the status of courage as a virtue?

Both Albert and Aquinas acknowledge the presence of *tristitia* in courageous acts, but they develop different strategies to deal with the problem. Albert sticks close to Aristotle's solution: that the act itself is only enjoyed insofar as the agent simultaneously looks to the end of his action. According to Albert, the pain present in the courageous act has to be seen primarily as sensual or bodily pain.<sup>58</sup> In a telling passage he points to the possibility that the *tristitia* experienced by the martyrs is a *propassio* (what Stoics mean by the term *propatheia*): a premature psychic

<sup>56</sup> See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.124.2 ad 3, *Opera omnia* 10: 29: “[P]rincipalior actus fortitudinis est sustinere, ad quem pertinet martyrium; non autem ad secundarium actum eius, qui est aggredi”.

<sup>57</sup> For this explanation see e.g. Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 3.18, p. 177.

<sup>58</sup> See *Super Ethica* 3.11 (221), p. 196: “[Actus fortitudinis] secundum substantiam suam sit tristis quantum ad sensum doloris”; *ibid.* (221), p. 197: “[D]icendum, quod utrumque potest esse simul in eodem, sed non secundum idem, quia dolor de actu est in sensu, cum operatio fortitudinis sit circa sensibiles passiones, gaudium autem est de fine in ratione”; *Ethica* 3.2.11, p. 250 (corrected with E f. 94<sup>ra</sup>): “[F]ortitudo quoddam triste est tristitiam ex sensu doloris [Borgnet: sensus doloribus] inferens... Sed [Borgnet: si] tamen quamvis magnam tristitiam habeat in sensu, adhuc vere fortis videbitur utique in fine quem secundum fortitudinem intendit, delectationem habere”; in this sense see also *De bono* 2.1.5 (143), p. 94.

movement that is not yet a full-fledged emotion because it lacks explicit consent by the mind.<sup>59</sup> This idea is also present in Albert's thought when he finally defines courage in his *Ethica* as a habit by which the agent "does not feel the pain caused by painful things in his mind, although he perceives it in his sense".<sup>60</sup> The spiritual pleasure that the agent takes in the attainment of a good end by his endurance can only attenuate the sensual pain and not completely eradicate it, but Albert leaves no doubt that the mind of the agent itself stands virtually untouched by the painful circumstances of the courageous act.<sup>61</sup>

While Albert develops a solution to the problem of *tristitia* that comes fairly close to the Stoic idea of apathy, Aquinas vigorously opposes exactly this view. In his commentary he explicitly points out the central difference between Aristotle and the Stoics in this area: the Stoic sage is free of spiritual pain or sadness in facing death because the loss of any temporal good (including one's own life) does no real harm to him; only virtue is a real good, all other things are indifferent so that their loss should cause no grief. Aristotle, on the other hand, assigns a certain value to goods other than virtue in the present life; hence the virtuous man, who possesses them in a high degree, is especially saddened by their loss.<sup>62</sup> These different attitudes towards the temporal goods of the present life, which Aquinas also acknowledges elsewhere in his commentary,<sup>63</sup> lead to very different conceptions of courage, especially with regard to the presence of spiritual pain or sadness. In speaking of the *error Stoicorum* Aquinas clearly opts for Aristotle's view

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<sup>59</sup> *De bono* 2.1.5 (144), p. 94: "Dionysius non intendit, quod nulla tristitia secundum sensum et rationem infuerit martyribus... Sed intendit, quod tristitia fuit in eis propasio, non perturbatio abducens vel absorbens passionem".

<sup>60</sup> *Ethica* 3.2.11, p. 251: "... tristitiam dolorosorum secundum rationem non sentit quamvis in sensu percipiat". See also Philip's interpretation of Aristotle's text, *Summa de bono*, p. 813: "'Et tristitiam (affert) fortitudo', ita scilicet quod non pertingit ad rationem".

<sup>61</sup> *Super Ethica* 3.11 (221), p. 197: "[D]electatio rationis non ita attenuat dolorem sensus, quod non faciat eum sentiri, quamvis communiter dicatur, quod in omnibus qui sunt tantum viatores, delectatio rationis minuat dolorem sensus".

<sup>62</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 1.18, pp. 177–178: "[Aristoteles] excludit error Stoicorum qui ponebant quod virtuosus nullam tristitiam habet... Arguit autem in prima parte ex eo quod supponebant Stoici, scilicet quod nihil esset bonum hominis nisi virtus; et ideo dicebant virtuosum non tristari, quia in proprio bono non patitur aliquod detrimentum. Sed e converso Philosophus dicit quod, quanto aliquis est magis perfectus in virtute et magis felix secundum felicitatem praesentis vitae, tanto magis imminet ei tristari in morte secundum considerationem bonorum praesentis vitae".

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* 1.16, p. 59.

that courage necessarily involves sadness, and this preference is firmly rooted in his own theological thought. Earthly human life and its goods are, contrary to the Stoic position, natural goods, the loss of which ought to be feared to a certain degree. Lacking the appropriate love for them is against our natural inclination and even constitutes a sin.<sup>64</sup> Therefore, contrary to Albert's emphasis on physical pain, courage is mainly concerned with enduring the psychic grief caused by the loss of one's life, which is mixed with the bodily suffering.<sup>65</sup>

These ideas can once again be related to the underlying paradigm of martyrdom as an act of maximum perfection in a special sense. Because martyrdom renounces the most highly valued and loved good of one's own life in favour of God, it is the perfect expression of *caritas*.<sup>66</sup> This choice certainly cannot be an easy one because the loss of natural goods necessarily involves a certain form of sadness: "Without that presupposing, the complex density characterizing the act of martyrdom would be vitiated or even destroyed for there would be no real difficulty to overcome. Rather than an act defined by the overcoming of difficulty, martyrdom would instead be characterized by its ease and lack of tension".<sup>67</sup> Thus Aquinas's reading of Aristotle concerning the sadness of the courageous act fits very well with his own theological views about the value of natural goods and the character of martyrdom.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> *Summa theologiae* II.II.125.4 ad 3, *Opera omnia* 10: 46: "[S]ecundum Stoicos, qui ponebant bona temporalia non esse hominis bona, sequitur ex consequenti quod mala temporalia non sint hominis mala, et per consequens nullo modo timenda. Sed secundum Augustinum... huiusmodi temporalia sunt minima bona. Quod etiam Peripatetici senserunt. Et ideo contraria eorum sunt quidem timenda"; cf. *ibid.* 126.1, p. 47: "Unde quod aliquis deficiat a debito modo amoris ipsorum, est contra naturalem inclinationem: et per consequens est peccatum... Unde contingere potest quod aliquis minus quam debeat, timeat mortem et alia temporalia mala, propter hoc quod minus debito amet ea".

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.* 123.8, p. 19: "Principalis vero actus fortitudinis est sustinere aliqua tristitia secundum apprehensionem animae, puta quod homo amittit corporalem vitam (quam virtuosus amat, non solum in quantum est quoddam bonum naturale, sed etiam in quantum est necessaria ad opera virtutum) et quae ad eam pertinent: et iterum sustinere aliqua dolorosa secundum tactum corporis, puta vulnera et flagella".

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.* 124.3, p. 33: "Manifestum est autem quod inter omnia alia bona praesentis vitae, maxime amat homo ipsam vitam, et e contrario maxime odit ipsam mortem... Et secundum hoc patet quod martyrium inter ceteros actus humanos est perfectior secundum suum genus, quasi maximae caritatis signum".

<sup>67</sup> Lee H. Yearley, "The Nature-Grace-Question in the Context of Fortitude", *The Thomist* 35 (1971), 573.

<sup>68</sup> For a perceptive reading of Aquinas's linking of sadness and courage see *id.*, *Mencius and Aquinas*, 135–139.



The necessary involvement of pain and sadness in courage calls for a specific virtue that prevents *tristitia* from overcoming reason and from holding firm to the recognized good: the virtue of patience (*patientia*), one of the traditional parts of courage.<sup>69</sup> Their patience ensures that agents are not more saddened by their courageous acts than they should be.<sup>70</sup> Thus, while acknowledging that courage and patience have different determinate objects (*timor/tristitia*), Aquinas in his theological works explicitly points out that patience works as an integral part of courage when the suffering of death is involved;<sup>71</sup> as an adjunct or secondary virtue it is responsible for the endurance of all kinds of evils.<sup>72</sup> Finally, patience is especially connected with martyrdom, the paradigmatic act of courage.<sup>73</sup> Thus it is the link between three elements central to Aquinas's overall account of courage: endurance, sadness and martyrdom.

#### *Concluding remarks*

In summing up these findings we can conclude that Albert and Aquinas altogether favor a conception of courage that comes very close to the Aristotelian notion. But they expand it vertically as well as horizontally. It is expanded vertically to include other forms of enduring severe difficulties: in an analogical reading courage includes the activities of its adjunct virtues and other semblances of true courage, but without collapsing into the Stoic idea of a general condition of every virtuous act. Horizontally, true courage is expanded to the religious sphere, especially to martyrdom as the principal act of courage. Much more

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<sup>69</sup> *Summa theologiae* II.II.136.1, *Opera omnia* 10: 97: “[N]ecesse est habere aliquam virtutem per quam bonum rationis conservetur contra tristitiam, ne scilicet ratio tristitiae succumbat. Hoc autem facit patientia”.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* 136.4 ad 2, p. 104: “Patientia vero principaliter est circa tristitias: nam patiens aliquis dicitur ex hoc quod laudabiliter se habet in patiendo quae praesentialiter nocent, ut scilicet non inordinate ex eis tristetur”.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* 136.4 ad 3, p. 104: “[P]atientia potest quantum ad aliquid sui, poni pars integralis fortitudinis... prout scilicet aliquis patienter sustinet mala quae pertinent ad pericula mortis”. For Albert's treatment of patience see *De bono* 2.2.4–6 (162–173), pp. 103–108.

<sup>72</sup> *Summa theologiae* II.II.136.4 ad 1, *Opera omnia* 10: 104: “Ad patientiam autem pertinere potest sustinentia quorumcumque malorum”.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* 124.2 ad 3, p. 29: “Et quia patientia deservit fortitudini ex parte actus principalis, qui est sustinere, inde est etiam quod concomitanter in martyribus patientia commendatur”.

could be said about the expansion of civic courage to the religious sphere if we looked at the differences and continuities between courage as an acquired virtue and infused courage as well as courage as a gift of the Holy Spirit. But since the present essay focuses on the development of virtue ethics in medieval commentaries on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, I shall limit myself to some brief remarks about the influence of Albert's and Aquinas's theological background on their presentation of Aristotelian courage.

As we have seen, the interpretation of courage in Albert's and Aquinas's *Ethics* commentaries fits very well with martyrdom, the paradigm example of courage they both have in mind. One can safely conclude that this idea shaped to some degree their reading of Aristotle concerning the primacy of endurance and the necessary involvement of *tristitia* in the courageous act. But this does not mean that their commentaries on these sections are deeply penetrated by religious or theological references to martyrdom; on the contrary, such references are rare. Though Albert quotes the Augustinian dictum *martyrem non facit poena sed causa*,<sup>74</sup> this simply serves to illustrate the Aristotelian idea that courage as a virtue necessarily involves the right motive for acting. Courage is not praised merely because it overcomes difficult obstacles but because it serves a just cause. Albert explicitly marks the Augustinian dictum as a theological quotation and does not delve deeper into martyrdom afterwards.<sup>75</sup>

Aquinas does not mention martyrdom in his analysis of courage in *EN* 3 at all, though in another part of the commentary he mentions the case of Saint Lawrence as an example of courageous endurance. As in Albert's commentary, the reference serves illustrative purposes because it would appeal to the understanding of the Christian reader of the text.<sup>76</sup> Both Aquinas and Albert hint at martyrdom when discussing the

<sup>74</sup> Augustine, *Epistula* 204.4, ed. Alois Goldbacher, CSEL 57: 319.

<sup>75</sup> *Super Ethica* 3.8 (203), p. 183: "Dicendum, quod materia communis fortitudinis est mors et proxima et propria est mors in bellis, non tamen in quibuslibet bellis, sed quae suscipiuntur ex iustitia ad defensionem patriae, quia, sicut in theologia dicitur, 'poena non facit martyrem, sed causa'." It seems to be his stock quotation in this context; see e.g. *De bono* 2.1.1 (128), p. 85: "Et sic mortui sunt martyres et optimi cives pugnantes pro libertate patriae. Et hoc est etiam quod dicit Augustinus, quod 'poena non facit martyrem, sed causa', quia poena non ostendit fortem, sed causa susceptionis periculi".

<sup>76</sup> *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 3.2, p. 122: "[Q]uaedam operationes sunt adeo malae quod ad eas faciendas nulla sufficiens coactio adhiberi potest, sed magis debet homo sustinere mortem patiendo durissima tormenta quam talia operari, sicut beatus Laurentius susti-

intricate problem of how the courageous act is motivated: since courage involves the readiness to die, the aim of its action must be valued more highly by the agent than his own life. The case of martyrdom, where the agent sacrifices visible goods for invisible ones, would now require a complex analysis of the kind of faith and the hope for an eternal life involved in this act. Both commentators refrain from pursuing the topic because they realize that this would not fall within the ambit of Aristotle's text.<sup>77</sup> Thus the difference between civic courage, an acquired virtue through which one acts for the public good (or worldly justice), and religious courage, a virtue infused by grace through which one acts for the sake of God, is not even mentioned in their commentaries.<sup>78</sup> The notion of patience, which is central to the account of courage in Aquinas's theological writings, does not figure in his commentary on the *Ethics*. Albert explicitly incorporates patience into the account of courage in his second commentary, but this is embedded in his attempt to harmonise the Aristotelian account with the Stoic theory of the parts of courage and therefore does not betray any theological purpose.<sup>79</sup>

At least concerning their analysis of courage, neither Albert nor Aquinas can be accused of distorting Aristotle's text by the direct transfer of religious ideas or theological principles to their interpretation of Aristotle.<sup>80</sup> They are clearly interested in presenting a coherent and philosophically defensible reading of Aristotle's text. Thomas does this

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nuit adustionem craticulae ne idolis immolaret. Et hoc ideo Philosophus dicit vel quia morienti propter virtutem remanet post mortem gloria, vel quia fortiter persistere in bono virtutis est tantum bonum ut ei aequiparari non possit diuturnitas vitae quam homo moriendo perdit”.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid. 3.18, p. 178: “Considerandum tamen quod aliquibus virtuosus propter spem futurae vitae fir mors desiderabilis; sed neque Stoici sic loquebantur neque ad Philosophum pertinebat de his quae ad statum alterius vitae pertinent in praesenti opere loqui”. For Albert see *Super Ethica* 3.11 (221), p. 196.

<sup>78</sup> For those differences see Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.124.2 ad 1, *Opera omnia* 10: 29: “Sicut autem fortitudo civilis firmat animum hominis in iustitia humana, propter cuius conservationem mortis pericula sustinet; ita etiam fortitudo gratuita animum hominis in bono iustitiae Dei, quae est per fidem Iesu Christi”. For courage as gift of the Holy Spirit in its difference to civic and infused courage see ibid. 139.1, p. 118.

<sup>79</sup> *Ethica* 3.2.10, p. 249–250.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Vernon J. Bourke, “The Nicomachean Ethics and Thomas Aquinas”, in *St Thomas Aquinas 1274–1974: Commemorative Studies*, ed. Armand A. Maurer et al. (Toronto, 1974), 258: “On the whole, Thomas as a commentator is very faithful to his author and tries to get at the exact meaning of the text itself”. For Albert's deliberately philosophical outlook in his commentaries on Aristotle's *Ethics* see Müller, *Natürliche Moral*, 48–58.

by providing an interpretative structure for the whole text, as well as by pointing out the superiority of Aristotle's account to Stoic views. Albert is especially keen on defending the adequacy of Aristotle's ethics in his first commentary. In the second commentary he tries to weave together several philosophical traditions, as evidenced by his direct interjection of the difference between cardinal and adjunct virtues, as well as by the integration of the Stoic parts of courage into his paraphrase of the text.

Their moderate expansion of the Aristotelian notion of courage, already visible in Albert's and Aquinas's commentaries, nevertheless leaves an opening for elaborating this philosophical account of civic courage in their theological works.<sup>81</sup> Thus they seem to have framed their interpretation of Aristotle's account of courage with further theological purposes in mind, but without transforming it into a doctrine defensible against rival claims only on the theological level.

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<sup>81</sup> A most striking example is found in Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 3.14, p. 161, quoted in full above n. 44. I agree with Jaffa, *Thomism and Aristotelianism*, 76, who thinks that "Thomas gives evidence of a reservation in favor of the religious martyr's death" in this passage. For the interpretation of this passage see also Doig, *Aquinas's Philosophical Commentary*, 250–251.



# ALBERT THE GREAT AND THOMAS AQUINAS ON MAGNANIMITY

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Aristotle's account of magnanimity in the *Nicomachean Ethics* tends to provoke mixed reactions. To posit human grandeur as an ethical ideal is appealing. Some details of Aristotle's portrait of human grandeur are very noble indeed. The magnanimous do not spare their lives when important matters are at stake, they repay favors with greater returns, are ready to help, they are moderate in the presence of ordinary people, they hold no grudges and are not gossipers. Nevertheless, Aristotle admits, magnanimous persons "appear to be arrogant" (4.3, 1124a20). Moreover, they come across as ungrateful, lazy, and standoffish. Other traits just seem strange: they have a slow gate and a deep voice.<sup>1</sup> The most objectionable trait of the magnanimous—especially when judged from a Christian viewpoint—appears to be their aspiration to superiority and their repugnance to dependence.

Yet surprisingly, when the full picture of Aristotle's understanding of magnanimity became known in the Latin West, the initial reactions were not at all disapproving or dismissive, but rather unqualifiedly positive. Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas, the first Latin thinkers to comment on Aristotle's account of magnanimity, both defended it without reservation.

This paper investigates the nature of the embrace of Aristotle's magnanimity by the two Dominican thinkers. Why do they welcome Aristotle's magnanimity? How can they integrate this new notion of mag-

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<sup>1</sup> The tensions among the various features of Aristotle's account are enhanced when taken out of context, as is done here. A more detailed discussion, as offered below, should make the account more intelligible.

nanimity into the traditional taxonomy of the virtues? How do they resolve the tensions? I intend to show three things: (1) in some ways they offer an ingenious interpretation of Aristotle; (2) the concept of magnanimity they attribute to the Stagirite is in its core different from Aristotle's own conception; (3) their departure from the spirit that animates Aristotle's notion of magnanimity is not reprehensible but rather laudable.

Albert offers quite detailed discussions of magnanimity in his *Ethics* commentaries, yet he says little about it in his other works. Thomas, conversely, presents a more elaborate account in his commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sententiae* and especially in the *Summa theologiae* than in his *Sententia libri Ethicorum*. Since my interest is in his understanding of Aristotle, I will refer to the *Summa* mainly to shed light on the *Sententia*.

Albert's and Thomas's reception of Aristotelian magnanimity is also an eminent example of their method of interpreting Aristotle's *Ethics*, in their commentaries and in their other writings. While not making this the principal goal of the investigation, I will pay attention to their method and draw some conclusions that seem to apply to their reception of Aristotle's *Ethics* in general.

Two sections will prepare the examination of the commentaries of Albert and Aquinas. First, it is useful to call to mind the account of magnanimity in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Second, a brief overview of the doctrinal influences on Albert's and Thomas's interpretation will be provided to help assessing the novelty of their understanding of magnanimity.

### *Aristotle's Account of Magnanimity*

In what follows I do not intend to present all the complexities of Aristotle's treatment of magnanimity in *Nicomachean Ethics* 4.3. I will rather try to provide a basic summary that serves as a point of reference for the examination of Albert's and Thomas's interpretation.

The first difficulty consists in understanding what precisely the virtue of magnanimity is concerned with, in which way magnanimity is a mean between deficiency and excess, and hence what accounts for the unity of magnanimity. According to the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the magnanimous person is he who "thinks himself worthy of great things and is truly worthy of them" (1123a34–b2). It is also he who has the best attitude with regard to honors and dishonors. Aristotle makes the

connection between the two aspects: the magnanimous person dignifies himself with great things while being truly worthy of them; one is called 'worthy of something' in respect to external goods; and the greatest external good is honor. Yet it remains somewhat unclear what gives unity to these two aspects and in which sense magnanimity is a mean in such matters.

In the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle seems to have deliberately avoided approaching this problem in a theoretical-analytical fashion because of the risk of inconsistencies. From the beginning he chooses to discuss magnanimity in its concrete instantiation, by characterizing the magnanimous person rather than the virtue itself.<sup>2</sup> The magnanimous person is one who is worthy of great things and whose self-estimation is not too great or too little. Although in book 2 chapter 7 magnanimity is described as a mean with regard to honors and dishonors, it is no longer so conceived in book 4 chapter 3.<sup>3</sup> What orders the desire for honors is a different, nameless virtue that constitutes the mean between caring too much and caring too little for honors (φιλοτιμία and ἀφιλοτιμία). Magnanimity and the nameless virtue do not smoothly fit into a clear-cut taxonomy: the nameless virtue is concerned with honors on a small scale whereas magnanimity regards honors on a large scale. The magnanimous person considers himself worthy of honor without aspiring to be honored, whereas the nameless virtue disposes one to pursue honors in a fitting way. Furthermore, magnanimity is appropriate self-esteem, whereas the nameless virtue has no explicit relation to self-esteem.<sup>4</sup>

Regarding the object of magnanimity there is a further complexity. In the relatively early *Posterior Analytics*, Aristotle presents magnanimity

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<sup>2</sup> Dirlmeier makes this point in Aristotle, *Nikomachische Ethik*, trans. Franz Dirlmeier (Berlin, 1964), 372.

<sup>3</sup> According to Dirlmeier, *EN* 2.7 represents an earlier stage of Aristotle's thought than *EN* 4.3; see his commentary in Aristotle, *Magna moralia*, trans. Franz Dirlmeier (Berlin, 1958), 293.

<sup>4</sup> For the different sense in which magnanimity and the nameless virtue are a mean, see William F.R. Hardie, "'Magnanimity' in Aristotle's Ethics", *Phronesis* 23 (1978), 64. With regard to the magnanimous person's attitude to honors, we can observe a progression in Aristotle's thought. According to the *Eudemian Ethics*, the magnanimous man gives great value to being honored by worthy people and on the right grounds. The *Nicomachean Ethics* offers a more refined account: the magnanimous person considers himself worthy of honor, but what he desires is honorability, i.e. virtue as the basis of rightly deserved honors. Cf. Ernst A. Schmidt, "Ehre und Tugend: Zur Megalopsychia der aristotelischen Ethik", *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 49 (1967), 149–168.



ity as comprising two aspects: not tolerating insults and indifference to good and bad fortune. In this passage Aristotle does not present magnanimity as a univocal notion; the magnanimous person's attitude to honor and to fateful events stand side by side.<sup>5</sup> In *Eudemian Ethics* 3.5, Aristotle presents an aspect that connects these two traits. It is the sense for what is truly great, as opposed to what merely appears great to the common run of people. Unlike most people, who strive for honor, life, and wealth, the magnanimous person disdains life, wealth, and the type of honor conferred on him by the many ("small honor"). He cares only about that honor which is bestowed on him by worthy people and on the right grounds ("great honor"). Conversely, the magnanimous person of the *Nicomachean Ethics* does not care much about receiving great honor, which he knows to be incommensurable with respect to his perfect virtue, the ground of his honorability. He is indifferent with regard to honors—striving for honors makes one in fact depend on others (*EN* 1.5, 1195b24–26)—and he is in fact indifferent with regard to the gifts of fortune in general. When he is struck by misfortunes, his attitude is calm, not because of insensitivity but out of nobility (*EN* 1.10, 1100b30–33).

The magnanimous person deserves what is greatest on the ground of his outstanding goodness. Magnanimity is hence connected to the other virtues. The relationship is bidirectional: magnanimity presupposes the virtues and it amplifies them. Aristotle therefore calls it the *κόσμος* (crown, ornament—or order) of the virtues (*EN* 4.3, 1123b26–1124a3). He does not spell out how this feature of magnanimity can be reconciled with its nature as a specific virtue. Do not courage, generosity, and justice by themselves imply greatness (*EN* 2.6, 1107a6–8) and therefore contain magnanimity as an epiphenomenon? If they do, then magnanimity would be best characterized as a second-order virtue. Yet Aristotle conceives of it as a mean and thereby assigns it a specific subject matter; thus he considers it to be a specific virtue.<sup>6</sup>

The various attitudes that Aristotle attributes to the magnanimous throughout the chapter take their origin in the magnanimous's desire

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<sup>5</sup> For the problem that the *Posterior Analytics* raises with respect to the unitary conception of magnanimity, see René-Antoine Gauthier, *Magnanimité: L'idéal de la grandeur dans la philosophie païenne et dans la théologie chrétienne* (Paris, 1951), 56–64; Neil Cooper, "Aristotle's Crowning Virtue", *Apeiron* 22 (1989), 194–201.

<sup>6</sup> For the problem of magnanimity as a specific virtue see *Eudemian Ethics* 3.5 (1232b25–1233a4) and Eunshil Bae, "'An Ornament of the Virtues'", *Ancient Philosophy* 23 (2003), 337–349.

for superiority and self-sufficiency, that is, independence. Nothing is great to him, nothing impresses him. He is therefore *καταφρονητικός* (1124b29), which Grosseteste translates as *contemptivus*. More literally, *καταφρονεῖν* means ‘to think low of’, which may imply indifference rather than contempt. Aristotle explains this notion in *Eudemian Ethics* 3.5: it is characteristic of every virtue to think low of that which appears, contrary to reason, to be great. Courage disdains dangers, temperance great pleasures, generosity wealth (1232a38–b4).<sup>7</sup>

Let us consider how the salient character traits of the magnanimous person originate in his mindset.<sup>8</sup> He wants to be superior in moral nobility (*EN* 9.8, 1168b25–31). For this reason, he likes to do good to others, but is ashamed to have good done to him; he returns favors in greater measure; he prefers to think of the good he has done rather than of that which he has received; he is willing to help others, but reluctant to ask for help. He rightly thinks of himself as great, yet he does not display his greatness, except with regard to eminent people, with respect to whom it is not easy to excel. He considers himself worthy of great things, but unworthy of small ones. Therefore Aristotle describes him as ‘inactive’, but as committed to a few actions of great importance and prestige. This attitude is reflected in the magnanimous man’s bodily expression: he has a slow gait, a low voice, a steady way of speech, because he is not prone to excitement. His aspiration to self-sufficiency finds expression in his preference for beautiful objects rather than for useful ones. He could never make his life depend on another, as the flatterers do. The magnanimous individual is indifferent towards

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<sup>7</sup> For an examination of the notion of *καταφρονεῖν* in Plato and Aristotle, see Michael Pakaluk, “Socratic Magnanimity in the *Phaedo*”, *Ancient Philosophy* 24 (2004), 101–117; id., “The Meaning of Aristotelian Magnanimity”, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 26 (2004), 244–246, 263–264.

<sup>8</sup> Aristotle’s portrait has provoked numerous critical reactions. Howard J. Curzer, “Aristotle’s Much Maligned Megalopsychos”, *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 69 (1991), 131–151, discusses numerous recent objections and defends Aristotle’s account. For an attempt to make the portrait intelligible by comparing some of its features with anthropological studies of Mediterranean honor-shame societies, see Dirk T.D. Held, “Μεγαλοψυχία in *Nicomachean Ethics* iv”, *Ancient Philosophy* 13 (1993), 95–110. Some interpreters see in each character trait of the portrait the description of the effect of magnanimity on a specific virtue, see Pakaluk, “The Meaning of Aristotelian Magnanimity”, 252–254; James Stover and Ronald M. Polansky, “Moral Virtue and Megalopsychia”, *Ancient Philosophy* 23 (2003), 356–357. Roger Crisp, “Aristotle on Greatness”, in *The Blackwell Guide to Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. Richard Kraut (Oxford etc., 2006), 174–177, argues that by reading the portrait and in general the account of magnanimity at face value, we discover Aristotle’s commitment to an “aesthetics of virtue”.

others (καταφρονεῖ), in particular towards the many, and accordingly he is frank in his speech. Yet he also cherishes friendship. He does not value his own life as the highest good and therefore does not spare it when facing great dangers.

This summary shows that literal interpretations, such as those attempted by Albert and Aquinas, require answers to at least the following questions: (1) what magnanimity is concerned with, (2) how it grows out of the other virtues and how in return it has an impact on them, while being distinct from them, and (3) how specific features of Aristotle's portrait, such as the appearance of ingratitude and arrogance, can be shown to be expressions of virtue rather than of vice. For Albert and Thomas, who embrace Aristotelian magnanimity in ethical theories giving prominence to virtues of biblical inspiration, another question is pressing: (4) how magnanimity fits with humility.

Before approaching the accounts offered by Albert and Aquinas, guided by these questions, it is useful to review the notion of magnanimity as it was handed down from antiquity.

#### *Direct and Indirect Sources of Albert's and Thomas's Accounts*

An extensive study of the immediate as well as the remote sources of medieval accounts has been provided by René-Antoine Gauthier in his remarkable book *Magnanimité*, which examines the history of the ideal of magnanimity from Greek antiquity to the late thirteenth century. Yet this book has been consistently neglected by English language publications on magnanimity in Aquinas. Focusing on direct while ignoring indirect sources, however, makes it difficult to see at what levels Albert's and Aquinas's accounts of magnanimity are novel. Both of them transform Aristotle's notion of magnanimity in more ways than merely by integrating humility and respect for all human beings into their account.

Before Grosseteste's translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics* became available in 1246/47, the only glimpses of Aristotle's notion of magnanimity available to scholastic were the brief mention in the *Ethica nova* and the short description in the *Ethica vetus*.<sup>9</sup> Only in the 1240s did

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<sup>9</sup> Aristotle, *Ethica nicomachea* 1.10 (1100b33), ed. René-Antoine Gauthier (Leiden-Brussels, 1972–1974), 87 (*Ethica nova*); *ibid.* 2.7 (1107b21–23), p. 16 (*Ethica vetus*); cf. Gauthier, *Magnanimité*, 296–299.

an impressive array of resources become accessible to the Latin interpreters. Albert the Great was the first to use them, when he taught a course on the *Nicomachean Ethics* in the Dominican study house in Cologne. Thomas Aquinas, who attended this course, was among the first to take advantage of Albert's efforts. He rewarded Albert by assuming the laborious task of redacting the commentary, now called the *Super Ethica* (1250–1252).<sup>10</sup> In his treatment of magnanimity Albert used, besides Grosseteste's translations of the *Nicomachean Ethics* and of the anonymous Greek Commentary, also Averroes's Middle Commentary and apparently the *Summa Alexandrinorum*, both translated by Hermanus Alemannus, in 1240 and 1243/44, respectively.<sup>11</sup> The treatment of magnanimity in the *Eudemian Ethics* was unknown to Albert and Aquinas.

Apart from Aristotle, it was Stoicism and Neo-Platonism that directly influenced Albert's explanation of magnanimity in the *Ethics* commentary and Thomas's account of magnanimity in his theological works, especially insofar as the two Dominicans attribute magnanimity to courage as a secondary virtue. Chrysippus inaugurated the distinction between primary and subordinate virtues and posited magnanimity as one of five virtues that belong to courage.<sup>12</sup> In *De officiis*, where Cicero emphasizes the political dimension of magnanimity, he pairs magnanimity with courage and gives it a twofold description: contempt of all external goods, for the sake of the moral good alone; the undertaking of great and difficult (*arduas*) actions.<sup>13</sup> Albert and Thomas refer

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<sup>10</sup> Wilhelm Kübel, "Prolegomena", in Albert the Great, *Super Ethica*, ed. Wilhelm Kübel, *Opera omnia* (Münster, 1951–) 14: VI, only cautiously admits the possibility that Thomas helped his master in the redaction of the *Super Ethica*. René-Antoine Gauthier, "Saint Thomas et l'Éthique à Nicomaque", in Thomas Aquinas, *Opera omnia* (Rome, 1882–) 48: XVII–XVIII, considers it highly probable that Thomas redacted it. Whether Thomas also knew Albert's second commentary is uncertain, see id., "Praefatio", in Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum*, *Opera omnia* 47: 256\*.

<sup>11</sup> For references to the anonymous Greek commentator, see *Super Ethica* 4.8 (296) and 4.10 (307), pp. 255, 262. In contexts other than magnanimity, Albert could also make use of Grosseteste's explanatory *notulae*; yet Grosseteste did not add any to the treatment of magnanimity, see Jean Dunbabin, "Robert Grosseteste as Translator, Transmitter, and Commentator: The 'Nicomachean Ethics'", *Traditio* 28 (1972), 472. Albert ignores Averroes's authorship of the Middle Commentary and refers to it as "alia translatio", see *Super Ethica* 4.8 (295, 297), pp. 254–255. Kübel failed to identify these as references to Averroes and to the *Summa Alexandrinorum*.

<sup>12</sup> *Chrysippi fragmenta moralia* 264 and 269, in *Stoicorum veterum fragmenta*, ed. Johannes von Arnim (Leipzig, 1903; repr. Stuttgart, 1964) 3: 64, 66.

<sup>13</sup> Cicero, *De officiis* 1.18.61–1.26.92, ed. Michael Winterbottom (Oxford, 1994), 25–38. See esp. 1.20.66, p. 27.

to Cicero's *De inventione* and to Macrobius as a justification for including magnanimity among the parts of fortitude (Thomas refers also to Pseudo-Andronicus).<sup>14</sup> An additional Stoic source that Aquinas cites in his treatment of magnanimity is Martin of Braga, whose *Formula vitae honestae* is inspired by a lost work of Seneca and was usually attributed to Seneca himself.<sup>15</sup>

Philip the Chancellor, an important point of reference for later thirteenth-century authors, depends on the *Moralium dogma philosophorum*,<sup>16</sup> a compilation heavily influenced by Stoicism, in describing magnanimity as a disposition that allows one to undertake dreadful actions and as an integral part of fortitude. To posit magnanimity as an integral part of fortitude rather than as one of its species means that fortitude cannot be instantiated without magnanimity (*fortitudo in aggrediendi*) and without its other integral parts, such as patience (*fortitudo in sustinendo sive patiendo*).<sup>17</sup> In his *De bono*, which antedates Grosseteste's translation of the *Ethics*, Albert the Great rejects Philip's conception of integral parts, but follows him in subordinating magnanimity to fortitude.<sup>18</sup> In his theological works, but not in his *Ethics* commentary, Thomas Aquinas treats magnanimity as a "quasi-integral part" of fortitude. Echoing Philip, he

<sup>14</sup> Id., *De inventione* 2.54.163, ed. Eduard Stroebel (Leipzig, 1915), 149; Macrobius, *In somnium Scipionis* 1.8.7, ed. Jakob A. Willis (Leipzig, 1963), 38; Pseudo-Andronicus, *Περὶ Πανδὸν*, ed. Anne Glibert-Thirry (Leiden, 1977), 246. Cf. Albert the Great, *De bono* 2.2.11 (181–182), ed. Carl Feckes, *Opera omnia* (ed. Münster) 28: 112–113; id., *Super Ethica* 4.8 (295), p. 253; Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* I.33.3, ed. Pierre F. Mandonnet and M. Ferdinand Moos (Paris, 1929–1947) 3: 1070–1102; *Summa theologiae* II.II.128.1 and 129.5 s.c., *Opera omnia* 10: 51–53, 66.

<sup>15</sup> Martin of Braga, *Formula vitae honestae*, in id., *Opera omnia*, ed. Claude W. Barlow (New Haven, 1950), 204–250. See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.5 obj. 1 and 129.5 ad 2, *Opera omnia* 10: 66.

<sup>16</sup> *Moralium dogma philosophorum*, ed. John Holmberg, *Das Moraliſium dogma philosophorum des Guillaume de Conches, lateinisch, altfranzösiſch und mittelniederfränkiſch* (Uppsala, 1929), 30. John R. Williams, "The Quest for the Author of the *Moralium Dogma Philosophorum*, 1931–1956", *Speculum* 32 (1957), 736–747, concludes that the authorship of William of Conches is highly unlikely. He admits that the authorship of William of Châtillon, defended by René-Antoine Gauthier, is possible, but in lack of conclusive evidence he leaves it an open question.

<sup>17</sup> Philip the Chancellor, *Summa de bono*, ed. Nikolaus Wicki (Bern, 1985), 806, 823–824.

<sup>18</sup> *De bono* 2.2.2 (157) and 2.2.11 (181–182), pp. 101, 112–113. Albert's understanding of magnanimity and of the related character dispositions in the *De bono* differs significantly from his *Ethics* commentaries. For a diachronic study of Albert's theory of the virtues, see Franz-Bernhard Stammkötter, "De virtutibus secundum principia philosophica: Die Philosophische Tugendlehre bei Albert dem Großen und Ulrich von Straßburg" (Ph.D. diss. Ruhr-Universität Bochum, 1996).

holds that fortitude has two acts: *aggredi* and *sustinere*.<sup>19</sup> Magnanimity sustains one in attaining a great good that one hopes for.<sup>20</sup>

*Albert the Great's Ethics Commentaries*

In Albert's understanding, there is no opposition between the Aristotelian view of magnanimity and virtues of biblical inspiration. I will examine first how Albert understands the nature of magnanimity, next his view of how magnanimity, a specific virtue, relates to the other moral virtues, and last how he brings Aristotelian magnanimity into line with other virtues, above all with gratitude and humility. The principal text for Albert's account of magnanimity is the *Super Ethica*. I refer to the second commentary, *Ethica*, which is in general less detailed, wherever it further develops the argument of the first commentary. Everything Albert writes about the Aristotelian account of magnanimity in his commentaries suggests that he does not distance himself from the doctrine he expounds, as he does in his commentaries on Aristotle's books on natural philosophy and on the *Metaphysics*,<sup>21</sup> but rather that he intends to embrace it.

*Virtues of Honor*

According to Aristotle, the magnanimous person's attitude to honors is consequent upon, but not identical with, his attitude to his own great value. By contrast, for Albert the identification of greatness and honor is immediate, and hence the fact that magnanimity is concerned with great things means that it has to do with honors. But for Albert it no longer entails that it has to do with honors on a large scale and that it is a privilege of an ethical elite. Whereas Aristotle stressed that magnanimity is a mean with regard to the self-estimation of worthy persons, Albert construes it simply as a mean with regard to honors.

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<sup>19</sup> *Scriptum in Sententias* III.33.3.3 q. 1 with ad 2, pp. 1087–1088; *Summa theologiae* II.II.123.6 and 128.1, *Opera omnia* 10: 15, 51–52.

<sup>20</sup> *Scriptum in Sententias* III.33.3.3 q. 1 and III.26.2.2 ad 4, pp. 1088, 837; *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.6, *Opera omnia* 10: 67.

<sup>21</sup> See James A. Weisheipl, "Albert's Disclaimers in the Aristotelian Paraphrases", *Proceedings of the Patristic, Mediaeval and Renaissance Conference* 5 (1980), 1–27. Such disclaimers are absent from his *Ethics* commentaries.

Magnanimity, he argues, has as its object what is absolutely great (*magnum absolutum*). The word ‘great’ can be predicated of all great things, but only honor, not riches, is “by its nature great and high”.<sup>22</sup> Riches come in various degrees, but honor is always something great and divine. Thus the idea of greatness is included in the notion of honor. Any honor, whether small or great, that one deserves on the basis of one’s virtue is the object of magnanimity.<sup>23</sup>

By taking magnanimity in this way, Albert rearranges the dispositions described in *EN* 4.3–4. For Albert, all dispositions of *EN* 4.3–4 are directly concerned with honors. Magnanimity concerns all honors, small or great; the virtue that regards only small honors is *temperantia*.<sup>24</sup> A more radical departure from Aristotle is Albert’s notion of a virtue of great honors, i.e. of those honors that are due to persons who hold a public office. Albert identifies this virtue with the nameless virtue of *EN* 4.4. It enables a dignitary who in virtue of his office is superior to others to dignify himself in the appropriate way, i.e., by claiming the respect due to his public office.<sup>25</sup> This interpretation is more than a stretch. Not only does Aristotle nowhere speak of a virtue of honoring political authorities, he says explicitly that the nameless virtue relates to magnanimity as generosity does to magnificence, and hence that it regards honors on a small scale (1125b1–5; *EN* 2.7, 1107b24–27). But Albert stipulates that Aristotle’s text inverted the order and that he intended to associate magnanimity with generosity, and the nameless virtue with magnificence.<sup>26</sup>

About ten years later, in his second commentary,<sup>27</sup> Albert confirms this interpretation of the nameless virtue and even gives it a name:

<sup>22</sup> *Super Ethica* 4.8 (296), p. 254.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* 4.11 (311), p. 267.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* 4.8 obj. 3 and ad 3 (295), pp. 253–254. Albert correctly distinguishes this virtue from the temperance that regards touch and taste. For Aristotle, the modest person (σώφρων) is not directly concerned with honors, but he is rather the one who correctly estimates himself as deserving small things, see *EN* 4.3 (1123b5).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* 4.11 (311), p. 267: “et circa magnos honores, qui sunt in gradibus dignitatis, haec virtus innominata erit, qua aliquis dignificat se honore dignitatis, quo aliis superponitur, secundum quod decet ipsum”.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* obj. 5 and ad 5, p. 267; cf. 4.11 (314), p. 269; see also 2.7 (145), p. 129, where he likewise holds that small honors are the object of magnanimity and great honors that of the nameless virtue. In Albert’s defense it must be said that Grosseteste’s translation of the passage is somewhat obscure, see Aristotle, *Ethica nicomachea* 2.7 (1107b25–30), p. 173 (*recensio pura*).

<sup>27</sup> There is a growing consensus that Albert wrote the *Ethica* in 1262; see Jörn Müller, *Natürliche Moral und philosophische Ethik bei Albertus Magnus* (Münster, 2001), 310.

*mavortia*.<sup>28</sup> His account is more consistent, but thereby also more radical: since *mavortia* is the virtue concerned with great honors, magnanimity now regards small things! It is worth quoting his explanation of this virtue at length:

Both the generous and the magnanimous person are remote from the great qua great. [Generosity and magnanimity] properly dispose us with regard to small things. When we said that magnanimity regards great things and the greatest things, this applies to the greatest things in the genus of external goods. Yet what is the greatest in regard to other genera may have, when compared to other things of its own genus, something small, smaller or smallest, and likewise something great, greater, and greatest. In this sense we said that magnanimity is concerned with small and moderate honor, which is commonly meant by the word honor. By contrast, the other virtue, which is more perfect than magnanimity, regards that honor which contains greatness in its very notion, because it includes in its notion the status of dignity or the title, such as praetor, or the status of a proconsul.<sup>29</sup>

How can one deserve honor if one is not virtuous? Aristotle insists that virtue alone, not noble birth, power, and riches, is truly a reason for deserving honor (*EN* 4.3, 1124a25–29). In a passage of *Super Ethica*, where Albert examines the question of whether someone who is not worthy of honor is to be honored, he answers that all dignitaries are rightly honored even when they are not virtuous. Albert does admit that honor is deserved only because of virtue. Yet he understands this in a widely analogical sense. Individuals can be honored because they

<sup>28</sup> *Ethica* 4.2.8, *Opera omnia*, ed. Stephanus C.A. Borgnet (Paris, 1890–1899) 7: 308. The text passage in the Borgnet edition is corrupted, and there are great divergences between the best manuscripts, see MSS Erlangen, UB 263, f. 105<sup>vb</sup> (hereafter: E) and Basel, ÖBU F.I.21, f. 65<sup>ra</sup> (hereafter: B). For the choice of these manuscripts to emend the text of Borgnet, see Müller, *Natürliche Moral*, 63, 321–322. Albert explains the word ‘mavors’ as ‘majora vertens’, which evokes the Stoic etymology of Mars reported in Cicero’s *De natura deorum* 3.62, ed. Otto Plasberg (Leipzig, 1933), 142: “Mavors, quia magna vertit”.

<sup>29</sup> *Ethica* 4.2.8, p. 308: “Ambo enim isti, liberalis scilicet et magnanimus, a magno quidem secundum quod magnum est, distant. Circa moderata autem et parva disponunt nos ut oportet. Quemadmodum enim diximus, quod magnanimitas circa magna et maxima est, hoc diximus de maximis in genere bonorum exteriorum. Quod autem maximum est comparatum ad genera alia, nihil prohibet in rebus sui generis quando comparantur ad invicem, et parum et minus et minimum habere, et similiter magnum et majus et maximum. Hoc igitur modo diximus quod magnanimitas circa (parvum) [= E f. 105<sup>va</sup>; Borgnet and B f. 65<sup>ra</sup>: ‘parum’] et moderatum honorem est, qui communiter honor vocatur. Alia autem virtus magnanimitate perfectior circa honorem est, qui in sui ratione magnitudinem habet, eo quod in quantum sui ratione vel gradum dignitatis vel titulum includit sicut est praetoratus, vel proconsulis gradus”.



have the habit of virtue, or because they possess what is a cause or an effect of virtue. The status of dignity is an effect of virtue, and for this reason dignitaries are to be honored. Such a status may not be directly the effect of the person himself, but it can be the “effect of the virtue of the Church or of the community, and hence I can honor him because of the virtue of the Church in which he is placed as a superior, or I can honor a king because of the virtue of the community over which he is placed as an authority. Peter says therefore: ‘honor the king’ [1 Pet. 2:17]”.<sup>30</sup> By extending the grounds of honorability to what is cause of virtue, Albert offers a philosophical consideration of the honorability of all human beings: because they are endowed with reason, the cause of virtue, all humans are to be honored.<sup>31</sup>

*Magnanimity as A Specific Virtue Located in the Irascible Appetite*

As mentioned earlier, a difficulty in Aristotle’s account of magnanimity is that magnanimity seems so linked with the other moral virtues that it does not appear to be really distinct from them. Albert discusses the character of magnanimity as a specific virtue in response to an objection. As it is argued, it seems that it is not a specific virtue. Magnanimity regards greatness, yet all virtues are concerned with some aspect of greatness: great gifts, great dangers etc. But if magnanimity regards the objects of the other virtues, it is not a specific virtue.

Since Albert identifies the object of magnanimity with honors, this difficulty is easily resolved: magnanimity does not regard just any greatness, but only that which is great by its very nature, and this is honor alone. Honor is what connects magnanimity with the other virtues, because all virtues deserve honor; but it is also that which distinguishes magnanimity from them, because honor is a special concern of magnanimity. As a specific virtue, magnanimity orders the desire for and the

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<sup>30</sup> *Super Ethica* 4.9 (306), p. 261: “Effectus autem virtutis est gradus dignitatis; quamvis enim non sit effectus semper virtutis personae, est tamen effectus virtutis ecclesiae vel communitatis, et ideo ipsum possum honorare propter virtutem ecclesiae, in qua praepositus est, et regem propter virtutem communitatis, cui praeficitur; unde dicit Petrus: ‘Regem honorificate’”. See also 4.8 (299), p. 257; *Ethica* 4.2.3 and 4.2.8, pp. 299, 307. Accordingly, it is not vanity when dignitaries dignify themselves despite their lack of virtue, see *Ethica* 4.2.1, p. 296.

<sup>31</sup> *Super Ethica* 4.9 (306), p. 261: “Causa autem virtutis est ratio; unde in quocumque est rationalis natura, habet aliquam causam honoris, et ideo Apostolus dicit: ‘Honore invicem praevenientes’ [Rom. 12:10]”.

attainment of honors.<sup>32</sup> Its relationship with the other virtues is bidirectional: the *bonum honestum* of every virtue grounds the honorability of the magnanimous person, and magnanimity allows one to accomplish what is great in each virtue.<sup>33</sup> Albert asserts this last aspect without explanation. That the moral virtues are the foundation for magnanimity is apparent, but Albert does not explain how magnanimity, if understood as the disposition that orders the desire for honors, affects the greatness in the other virtues, making a person more courageous, generous, etc.

This perplexity is a consequence of the moralistic turn of Albert's notion of magnanimity. According to Aristotle, the correct attitude towards great things is consequent upon the magnanimous man's greatness. Such a person need not make an effort to be magnanimous, precisely because he *is* great. He is realistic and sees things as they are: he understands his own value and consequently knows that he deserves being honored. Yet he does not covet honors; for Aristotle what orders the aspiration of honor as such is the nameless virtue, not magnanimity. For Albert, conversely, it is just this that magnanimity accomplishes. Precisely insofar as honors are desired are they the object of the virtue of magnanimity.

By conceiving of magnanimity as the virtue that orders the desire of honors, Albert not only sets it apart from the other moral virtues, he also thinks of it as perfecting a specific power of the soul. He locates it in the irascible power, for the irascible has as its object the *bonum arduum*, the great or lofty good.<sup>34</sup> Magnanimity regards the *arduum in honoribus*;<sup>35</sup> it allows one to "strive for what is high as such, as is honor".<sup>36</sup> Since magnanimity, like courage, perfects the irascible power, it relates more to fortitude than to any other cardinal virtue.

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid. 4.8–9 (296, 301, 298), pp. 254, 259, 256. See also *Ethica* 4.2.2, p. 297: "Nec honor sic meritum est omnis virtutis quod in se non sit quoddam bonum diffinitione et substantia a virtutibus (separatum) [E f. 101<sup>ra</sup>, B f. 62<sup>va</sup>; Borgnet: 'speratum']".

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. 4.10 ad 2 and ad 1 (309), p. 264.

<sup>34</sup> For a discussion of this terminology with numerous references to Albert, Thomas, and their contemporaries, see Gauthier, *Magnanimité*, 321–327.

<sup>35</sup> *Super Ethica* 4.8 ad 2 (295), p. 254.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. ad 1: "ad insurgendum in altum secundum se, sicut est honor". 'Arduum' as the object of magnanimity is stressed by the *Summa Alexandrinorum* (versio communis), ed. Concetto Marchesi, *L'Etica nicomachea nella tradizione latina medievale* (Messina, 1904), LVII, where the treatment of magnanimity starts with the line: "Magnanimus autem est ille qui ad res arduas aptus ens ex ipsarum gaudet et delectatur tractatione"; cf. *Summa Alexandrinorum* (redactio patavina), ed. George B. Fowler, "Manuscript Admont 608 and Engelbert of Admont (c. 1250–1331)", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 49 (1983), 216.

Albert conceives of magnanimity in fact as a *virtus adiuncta* to fortitude.<sup>37</sup> Although Aristotle does not divide the virtues into cardinal virtues and secondary virtues, Albert describes all the virtues discussed in Book 4 as *virtutes adiunctae*.<sup>38</sup> His conception of magnanimity as a virtue akin to courage, a virtue that manifests itself as an active pursuit of the *bonum arduum*, is manifestly influenced by the Stoics.

### *Justification of the Portrait*

None of the nineteen traits that Albert counts in the portrait draw any negative critique. Yet he does pay special attention to a few of them, in particular to those that may appear to be vices: ingratitude, inactivity, and laziness. The difficulty with the last two is easily resolved, insofar as Albert does not take them in the literal sense. The magnanimous are inactive with regard to mean and base actions, since they prefer to do great things. Their laziness means that they are not precipitous, but premeditate their action carefully in order to avoid doing something unworthy.<sup>39</sup>

Philological solutions, however, will not suffice to absolve the magnanimous from the accusation of ingratitude. Aristotle's magnanimous persons remember what good they have done to others, but not the good they have received; they like to hear about the latter but not about the former. In an objection, Albert cites as counter-authorities Seneca and Cicero, both of whom advocate the opposite attitude towards giving and taking: the giver is to forget immediately, and the receiver is always to remember.<sup>40</sup> Albert's solution does not address the real problem; he explains that someone is ungrateful who does not return the good things received. Conversely, Aristotle's magnanimous man is exemplary in matters of giving and receiving: he returns more than the good received. Albert adds that he tries to return the good quickly, so that he is not in the other's debt.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>37</sup> *Super Ethica* 4.8 (295), pp. 253–254; see also 3.8 (200), p. 180.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* 4.1 (250), p. 220.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* 4.10 ad 7 (309) ad 7, p. 265; cf. *Ethica* 4.2.6, p. 304.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* obj. 3 (309), p. 264. Albert's citation applies more directly to Seneca, *De beneficiis* 1.4.5, ed. Carl Hosius (Leipzig, 1900), 9, than to Cicero, *De officiis* 2.20.69, pp. 99–100; cf. *Ethica* 4.2.5, pp. 302–303.

<sup>41</sup> *Super Ethica* 4.10 (309) ad 5, p. 265.

Those characteristics of Aristotle's portrait that seem to contradict humility are not given much weight by Albert. He does not even gloss them in his *expositio textus*, except for the passage where Aristotle calls lowly people (*humiles*) flatterers. There Albert adds a qualification: "humble, i.e. despicable persons".<sup>42</sup>

### *Humility and Self-Esteem*

Aristotle's magnanimous man is a person of great value who is aware of his worth. He likes worthy people to recognize his value by honoring him. He strives for superiority and self-sufficiency and only reluctantly thinks of his dependence on others. Aristotle considers lowly people—*humiles* in Grosseteste's translation—to be flatterers. The anonymous commentator whom Albert carefully studied associates humility with the vice of pusillanimity.<sup>43</sup> Of course, Holy Scripture and the exhortations of Christian saints advocate a different attitude toward humility.<sup>44</sup>

Albert recognizes the importance of the question. Indeed, the first topic of discussion in both commentaries is the relation between magnanimity and humility. His method in commenting on the *Ethics* would have permitted him to distinguish between the demands of Aristotle's pagan account of magnanimity on the one hand and of Christian teaching on the other, as he does in a number of contexts in the *Super Ethica* where he distinguishes between the perspectives of philosophy and theology.<sup>45</sup> But instead of opposing Aristotle's concept of magnanimity to Christian humility, Albert intends to solve the problem on

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid. (308), p. 263: "hoc pertinet ad humiles, idest ad despectas personas"; cf. *Ethica* 4.2.6, p. 305.

<sup>43</sup> Anonymus, *In Ethicam nicomacheam* 4.8, in *The Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle in the Latin Translation of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln (†1253)*, I: *Eustratius on Book I and the Anonymous Scholia on Books II, III and IV* ed. H. Paul F. Mercken (Leiden, 1973) I: 333.

<sup>44</sup> For an excellent discussion of humility up to the twelfth century, see Gauthier, *Magnanimité*, 375–404, 416–442.

<sup>45</sup> For Albert's distinction between philosophical ethics and moral theology, see Müller, *Natürliche Moral*, 48–61; Martin J. Tracey, "The Character of Aristotle's Nicomachean Teaching in Albert the Great's *Super Ethica commentum et quaestiones* (1250–1252)" (Ph.D. diss. University of Notre Dame, 1999), ch. 2; Jean Dunbabin, "The Two Commentaries of Albertus Magnus on the Nicomachean Ethics", *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 30 (1963), 232–250. Aquinas makes use of this distinction to show why Aristotle did not speak of humility, see *Summa theologiae* II.II.161.1 ad 5, *Opera omnia* 10: 293.

the philosophical level. He denies that the tension between magnanimity and humility is real. The magnanimous can recognize their value and still be humble. In fact, humble persons lower themselves, insofar as they are aware that what they have, they have received from God. From this perspective, humble persons consider themselves unworthy of honor. Yet they dignify what is divine in them—not doing so would be unjust and ungrateful. Truly humble persons do not think themselves to be higher than they are, but congruently with magnanimity, their self-estimation corresponds to their true value.<sup>46</sup> Albert suggests that magnanimous persons are humble, and that sincerely humble persons are magnanimous.

In his second commentary, Albert appeals to Socrates and Plato for confirmation. He alludes to the passage in the *Phaedo* where Plato argues that the human being is composed of a mortal body and of an immortal soul. The first is a likeness of the changeable, the mortal, and the human; the second is a likeness of the unchangeable, the immortal, and the divine (*Phaedo* 80a–b). When humble persons take credit for their greatness, they refer to that which is divine in them, not to that which is human. Albert corroborates this point with Socrates' claim that the virtues are god-given (*Meno* 99e–100a).<sup>47</sup> This appeal to Socrates is surprising. At the beginning of *Ethica*, Albert declares the Aristotelian view of the acquisition of the moral virtues to be the foundation of his commentary over and against the Socratic view of the divine infusion of the virtues. Later in Book 1, he refutes the Socratic view with philosophical arguments.<sup>48</sup>

Albert's solution shows that recognizing one's value is coherent with the awareness of one's complete dependence. Yet in his account, everything that is valuable in a person is solely due to God, not to the person himself. Self-esteem, as the recognition of the value one owes to one's own accomplishments, is not high on Albert's agenda. By contrast, what animates the magnanimous person described by Aristotle is his desire for independence rather than dependence; moreover, for the Stagirite, greatness is not god-given, but attained through one's own efforts.

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<sup>46</sup> *Super Ethica* 4.8 (294) ad 1 and ad 3, p. 253.

<sup>47</sup> *Ethica* 4.2.2, p. 297.

<sup>48</sup> *Ethica* 1.1.2, ed. Müller, *Natürliche Moral*, 330–331; *Ethica* 1.7.5, p. 114. For Albert's view of Socrates and Plato in the *Super Ethica*, see Martin J. Tracey, "The Character of Aristotle's Nicomachean Teaching", ch. 4.

*Thomas Aquinas's Sententia libri Ethicorum*

Much more systematically than Albert, Thomas is careful to distinguish between the explanation of the Aristotelian notion of magnanimity on Aristotle's own terms and the reception of Aristotle's doctrine together with other sources in his own constructive account. In the *Sententia libri Ethicorum*, Thomas's methodic concern is to disclose the *intentio Aristotelis* and to make it intelligible to his readers.<sup>49</sup> Passages that may cause scandal generally receive attenuating explanations. *Quaestiones*, which constitute the larger part of Albert's *Super Ethica*, are absent from the *Sententia*, and lengthy digressions, which characterize Albert's *Ethica* as well as his other Aristotle paraphrases, are less frequent. Thomas's personal contribution is mostly found in the form of short glosses on Aristotle's text.

Gauthier has analyzed Thomas's understanding of magnanimity in great detail.<sup>50</sup> In what follows I intend to examine it from a perspective that is not the focus of Gauthier's study by paying attention to Thomas as interpreter of the Aristotelian account of magnanimity. I draw mainly on the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* to show how he approaches Aristotle's account taken by itself, apart from his concern to integrate it into a larger whole.<sup>51</sup> The *Summa theologiae* and to a smaller extent

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<sup>49</sup> How this concern is to be described in more detail is heavily debated. The opinions of scholars vacillate between two extremes: (1) Thomas merely intends to interpret Aristotle, without appropriating the doctrines he expounds; (2) he appropriates all the expounded views of Aristotle. For a rehearsal of the literature and a balanced solution, see John Jenkins, "Expositions of the Text: Aquinas's Aristotelian Commentaries", *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 5 (1996), 36–62.

<sup>50</sup> Gauthier, *Magnanimité*, 295–371, 451–465. For more recent but less comprehensive studies of Thomas's view, see David A. Horner, "What It Takes to Be Great: Aristotle and Aquinas on Magnanimity," *Faith and Philosophy* 15 (1998), 415–444; Mary M. Keys, "Aquinas and the Challenge of Aristotelian Magnanimity", *History of Political Thought* 24 (2003), 37–65, reprinted with minor changes in ead., *Aquinas, Aristotle, and the Promise of the Common Good* (Cambridge, 2006), 143–172. Thomas is also discussed in two studies that focus more on an account of magnanimity in its own right than on an exegesis of Thomas: Carson Holloway, "Christianity, Magnanimity, and Statesmanship", *Review of Politics* 61 (1999), 581–605; Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung, "Aquinas's Virtues of Acknowledged Dependence: A New Measure of Greatness", *Faith and Philosophy* 21 (2004), 214–227.

<sup>51</sup> Thomas's depiction of Aristotelian magnanimity in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* has been discussed by Harry V. Jaffa, *Thomism and Aristotelianism: A Study of the Commentary by Thomas Aquinas on the Nicomachean Ethics* (Chicago, 1952), 134–141. Jaffa's focus is narrow on two counts: first, he searches for gross misunderstandings of Thomas; second, the criterion to arbitrate between a correct and false interpretation is a peculiar

the commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sententiae* are within the scope of this investigation, because in a number of articles Thomas discusses and evaluates certain features of Aristotle's portrayal of magnanimity. Although on the whole, the treatment of magnanimity in the *Summa* has a Stoic outlook, some passages within it can be considered, as it were, an extension of its discussion in the *Sententiae*.<sup>52</sup> What emerges from a close look at Thomas's understanding of the difficult Aristotelian account of magnanimity is that he is an excellent interpreter of Aristotle, above all insofar as he offers Aristotelian solutions to problems Aristotle himself leaves unsolved.<sup>53</sup> This appears particularly in his understanding of the object of magnanimity and in his solution to the problem of whether one can be virtuous but lack magnanimity. His discussion of some features of the portrait is likewise noteworthy. Like Albert, Thomas is concerned to give charitable interpretations of the character traits that Aristotle describes, but Thomas's glosses generally appear less artificial than those of his master. A point where Aquinas clearly departs from the Aristotelian mindset is his discussion of the relation between magnanimity and humility, which is however absent from the *Sententiae*. Thomas shows little concern to relate his views on humility to Aristotle's teaching. To these four topics—the object of magnanimity, the connection of virtues, the portrait, and humility—we now turn.

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reading of Aristotle's discussion of magnanimity. Jaffa considers Aristotle's account merely descriptive and not normative, and he stipulates that the Stagirite describes the magnanimous only in their own terms, and not as a character type that is an integral part of Aristotle's moral doctrine.

<sup>52</sup> Gauthier suggests that the *Secunda pars* may in a certain sense be considered the commentary by quaestiones to the *Sententiae*, see his introduction in Aristotle, *L'Éthique à Nicomaque*, ed. René-Antoine Gauthier and Jean-Yves Jolif (Louvain-Paris, 1970) 1.1: 131. *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.1–4 and 129.8 read like *quaestiones* that are directly concerned with *EN* 4.3–4.

<sup>53</sup> Thus I will come to a different conclusion than Gauthier, for whom famously “le commentaire de saint Thomas sur l'*Éthique*, envisagé du point de vue de l'exégèse aristotélicienne, est une œuvre manquée et de nul secours” (*L'Éthique à Nicomaque* 1.1: 131). Later, Gauthier qualifies somewhat his statement, see “Saint Thomas et l'*Éthique* à Nicomaque”, XXV: “Si donc il avait voulu faire œuvre d'historien ou de critique, l'historien et le critique seraient en droit de juger son œuvre, et de la dire manquée. Mais il n'a voulu faire œuvre que de sagesse”.

*Honor and Great Things*

Thomas recognizes that for Aristotle a central characteristic of magnanimity is not only that it is concerned with honor (the aspect unilaterally stressed by Albert), but also with greatness. In the *Summa*, Thomas captures the two aspects in a concise formula: “magnanimity regards two things: it has honor as its object, and doing something great as its end.”<sup>54</sup> By correlating these two aspects in this original way, Thomas is able to provide an ingenious interpretation which gives unity to a number of seemingly unrelated themes in Aristotle’s account.

It may appear at first sight that the *Ethics* commentary pursues the same one-sided emphasis on honors that was observable in Albert. Already in the introduction to the discussion of magnanimity, Thomas announces that this virtue regards honors—great honors, for moderate honors are the object of the nameless virtue.<sup>55</sup> A bit later his expression is formal: the proper object (*materia propria*) of magnanimity is honors.<sup>56</sup> Yet when addressing the question of what makes magnanimity a specific virtue, Thomas puts to work the *Summa*’s distinction between the object and the end of magnanimity. His solution is similar to Albert’s, but more subtle. For Albert, magnanimity is specified by its object, honor, but how conversely magnanimity makes each virtue greater is unclear in Albert’s account. To this problem, Thomas offers a solution. To deserve great honor, one must do great acts of virtue. Now each of the other virtues leads one to do what is proper to that particular virtue, for example, fortitude aims at acting bravely. Magnanimity, however, aims at doing something great when acting bravely. Hence the ends of magnanimity and fortitude—or of any other virtue, for that matter—are different. Consequently, these virtues are also different in kind, for they are specified by their end.<sup>57</sup> The *Summa* offers the same solution in more detail: magnanimity is a specific virtue because it applies the mode of reason to a special object, honors. It magnifies

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<sup>54</sup> *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.8, *Opera omnia* 10: 69: “magnanimitas ad duo respicit: ad honorem quidem sicut ad materiam; sed ad aliquid magnum operandum sicut ad finem”; cf. *ibid.* 129.1, p. 57. For a brief account of Thomas’s distinction between the object or *materia circa quam* and the end, see my “Moral Action as Human Action: End and Object in Aquinas in Comparison with Abelard, Lombard, Albert, and Scotus”, *The Thomist* 67 (2003), 83–89.

<sup>55</sup> *Sententia libri Ethicorum* (henceforth *SLE*) 4.8, *Opera omnia* 47: 226.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* 4.9, p. 230.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* 4.8, p. 228; cf. *Summa theologiae* II.II.134.2, *Opera omnia* 10: 90. For the end as specifying moral actions, see *Summa theologiae* I.II.1.3, *Opera omnia* 6: 10.



the other virtues—Thomas lists the virtues he discovers in Aristotle’s portrait: prudence, justice, charity, generosity, truthfulness, patience—which means that, thanks to magnanimity, the acts of these virtues are performed under the special aspect of excellence.<sup>58</sup> Why temperance is not part of the list, Thomas tells us in the *Sententia*: temperance “does not have any greatness of itself, but regards that which we have in common with brute animals... whereas it is characteristic of magnanimity to perform what is great in each virtue”.<sup>59</sup>

Because honor is only the object of magnanimity, not its end, Thomas denies that the magnanimous person gives much importance to honor. He writes: “In this way magnanimity is concerned with honor, namely insofar as the magnanimous man strives after doing what is worthy of honor, but not in the sense that he considers human honor a great thing.”<sup>60</sup> In the commentary on Lombard’s *Sententiae* he is even more explicit: “The magnanimous person does not desire honor as if it were an end of his will, for he considers this too small a thing, since it is a worthless and transitory good. Therefore he does not care much about being honored, but about being worthy of honor, insofar as honor serves as proof of virtue”.<sup>61</sup> Thomas thereby seems to capture well Aristotle’s teaching in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

In sum, by stressing that greatness (not honor) is the aim of magnanimity, Thomas accounts for the status of magnanimity as a special virtue and for the magnanimous person’s indifference to actually being honored. Yet the insistence on doing something great when acting virtuously leads Thomas to bend somewhat the nature of Aristotle’s magnanimity. For Aristotle, magnanimity is a mean with regard to the self-perception of worthy people. Thomas’s gloss shifts the attention from self-esteem tout court to the self-recognition of one’s abilities: “a person seems to be magnanimous who considers himself worthy of great

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<sup>58</sup> *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.4 with obj. 2 and ad 2, 129.5 ad 2, and 134.2 ad 2, *Opera omnia* 10: 64, 66, 91.

<sup>59</sup> *SLE* 4.10, p. 233: “Praetermittit autem de materia temperantiae, quia non habet de se aliquam magnitudinem, sed est circa ea quae sunt nobis et brutis communia, ut in III habitum est; magnanimitatis autem est operari magnum in omnibus virtutibus”.

<sup>60</sup> *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.1 ad 3, *Opera omnia* 10: 58: “Et hoc modo magnanimitas est circa honorem, ut videlicet studeat facere ea quae sunt honore digna, non tamen sic ut pro magno aestimet humanum honorem”.

<sup>61</sup> *Scriptum in Sententias* II.42.2.4, 2: 1081: “Non enim magnanimus honorem quaerit tamquam finem voluntatis suae, quia hoc nimis sibi parvum reputat, cum sit vanum et transitorium bonum; unde non multum curat honorari, sed fieri honore dignum, secundum quod honor est testimonium virtutis”.

things, i.e., that he may do great things and that great things may be done to him, when he is indeed worthy".<sup>62</sup>

In keeping with the emphasis on activity, Thomas identifies the *caymus* (puffed-up) with the presumptuous.<sup>63</sup> In the *Summa*, he characterizes presumption as sinful and vicious; it is the pursuit of activities that exceed one's abilities.<sup>64</sup> By contrast, Aristotle sees in the puffed-up persons merely a cognitive, not a moral defect. They dignify themselves of great things without being worthy of them. Aristotle avoids to call them vicious (1125a18–19). Only incidentally is this disposition displayed in an attitude towards actions: puffed-up people attempt great actions, but fail to complete them (1125a28–29). Aristotle does not condemn, but ridicule them.

### *Large-Scale Virtues and the Connection of Virtues*

In the *Sententia* and in his theological works, Aquinas makes another significant contribution to the interpretation of the Aristotelian account of magnanimity. This virtue is not accessible to all, but only to people of great value. Others, who lack exceptional qualities but nevertheless have a realistic view of their value, are merely moderate (*EN* 4.3, 1123b5). Likewise, magnificence is a virtue reserved to a prosperous elite; others, who have the right attitude towards giving and taking material goods, are merely generous. "For the magnificent person is generous, but this does not at all mean that the generous person is magnificent" (4.2, 1122a28–29). In other words, a person can possess generosity and hence be virtuous without possessing magnificence. Aristotle holds in fact that while external goods are required for a virtuous life, limited resources suffice, and that the excess of goods may even be harmful.<sup>65</sup> Yet Aristotle is also committed to the view that an individual cannot possess one moral virtue without having all the other moral virtues (6.13, 1144b32–1145a2). Hence it seems that Aristotle must

<sup>62</sup> *SLE* 4.8, p. 226: "ille videtur esse magnanimus qui dignum se ipsum aestimat magnis, id est ut magna faciat et magna ei fiant, cum tamen sit dignus".

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* 4.11, p. 237. In the theological works, the vice of excess relative to the mean of magnanimity is pride (*superbia*), i.e. an unregulated desire of excellence, see *Scriptum in Sententias* III.33.3.2 q. 3 ad 2, 3: 1085; *De malo* 8.2, *Opera omnia* 23: 199.

<sup>64</sup> *Summa theologiae* II.II.130.1, *Opera omnia* 10: 71.

<sup>65</sup> *EN* 10.8. (1178a28–b3, 1179a1–9); cf. 4.3. (1124a30–31).

either give up the connection of the virtues or exclude the large-scale virtues from the requirement of reciprocity.<sup>66</sup>

Aquinas addresses this difficulty repeatedly. He offers two different solutions, one coherent with Aristotle's teaching ('the Aristotelian solution'), and one which is not ('the non-Aristotelian solution'). Which of the two he makes use of seems to depend on the context. Both solutions are inspired by a *quaestio* of the *Super Ethica* regarding magnificence, where Albert opts for the non-Aristotelian solution.

Albert grants that poor persons can be magnificent. He argues that with regard to the *use* of external goods, magnificence is the privilege of wealthy people alone. Yet poor individuals can nevertheless have the *habitus* of magnificence. Against the objection that a *habitus* can be acquired only by means of acts, and since someone poor cannot do any acts of magnificence, he or she cannot obtain the *habitus* of magnificence, Albert retorts that magnificence is not acquired through external acts—these are indeed out of reach for the poor—but rather by the internal act of the will, that is, by the intention to do such acts. Thus it is possible to be magnificent and poor, for the poor person learns to be magnificent by way of repeated internal acts of magnificence.<sup>67</sup>

I see this solution as non-Aristotelian, because Aristotle thought that virtues cannot be attained by an internal 'practice' alone. In order to acquire the moral virtues, one must perform virtuous acts, rather than merely desire to do so. Actions are more important than the decision to act; only together do they generate moral virtue (*EN* 10.8, 1178a28–b3). People who never succeed at putting their good intentions to practice cannot have the virtues.<sup>68</sup>

In the *Sententia* and within the discussion of the connection of virtues in the *Summa*, Thomas offers a solution that I call Aristotelian, for although it goes beyond Aristotle's text, it respects the spirit of Aristotelianism. An objection in the *Summa* addresses the difficulty precisely

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<sup>66</sup> This problem has been the object of a recent debate, see Terence H. Irwin, "Disunity in the Aristotelian Virtues", *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, supplementary volume, ed. Julia Annas and Robert H. Grimm (1988), 61–78; Richard Kraut, "Comments on 'Disunity in the Aristotelian Virtues', by T.H. Irwin", *ibid.*, 79–86; Irwin, "Disunity in the Aristotelian Virtues: A Reply to Richard Kraut", *ibid.*, 87–90; Stephen M. Gardiner, "Aristotle's Basic and Non-Basic Virtues," *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 20 (2001), 261–296.

<sup>67</sup> *Super Ethica* 4.5 (282), p. 243–244.

<sup>68</sup> For the importance of success, see Irwin, "Disunity in the Aristotelian Virtues", 64–66.

as the problem is posed by the *Nicomachean Ethics*, with explicit mentions of both magnificence and magnanimity.<sup>69</sup> In response, Thomas argues that someone who does not have the prerequisite to possess magnanimity and magnificence may nevertheless have the other moral virtues without having the habits of the large-scale virtues *in actu*. Yet the other virtues dispose one to have these virtues *in potentia propinqua*. Someone who has learned to be generous with moderate goods needs only a little practice to acquire magnificence once he or she receives abundant riches.<sup>70</sup> The solution is similar in the *Sententia*: poor virtuous persons lack magnificence, but they nevertheless possess prudence. Thanks to this prudence, they are so disposed that they are able to quickly become magnificent once they acquire the material resources.<sup>71</sup>

This solution seems to work within the Aristotelian framework, if one takes Aristotle to allow for the attainment of prudence without actually possessing the large-scale virtues. In theological contexts, however, Thomas returns to the Albertian, non-Aristotelian solution. It has the advantage of explaining how Christ, who in his earthly life possessed no great resources, had the virtue of magnificence not only in potency, but also in act.<sup>72</sup> Thus there is no virtue that Christ did not perfectly possess. When Thomas discusses magnificence in the *Secunda secundae*, he neither feels bound by Aristotle's authority, nor is his immediate concern to ascribe magnificence to Christ. Here as well, he repeats Albert's explanation of how a poor person can possess magnificence *in actu*: a poor person can have magnificence because this virtue is generated by

<sup>69</sup> *Summa theologiae* I.II.65.1 obj. 2, *Opera omnia* 6: 418.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* ad 1, p. 419: "Quaedam vero virtutes morales sunt quae perficiunt hominem secundum aliquem eminentem statum, sicut magnificentia, et magnanimitas. Et quia exercitium circa materias harum virtutum non occurrit unicuique communiter, potest aliquis habere alias virtutes morales, sine hoc quod habitus harum virtutum habeat actu, loquendo de virtutibus acquisitis. Sed tamen, acquisitis aliis virtutibus, habet istas virtutes in potentia propinqua. Cum enim aliquis per exercitium adeptus est liberalitatem circa mediocres donationes et sumptus, si superveniat ei abundantia pecuniarum, modico exercitio acquirit magnificentiae habitum, sicut geometer modico studio acquirit scientiam alicuius conclusionis quam nunquam consideravit." See also *Scriptum in Sententias* IV.14.1.3 q. 2, 4: 604; *De virtutibus cardinalibus* 2 ad 5 and ad 9, in *Quaestiones disputatae*, ed. P. Bazzi et al. (Turin etc., 1949), 820.

<sup>71</sup> *SLE* 6.11, p. 377. At 1.5, p. 20, when commenting on a passage that does not mention magnificence and magnanimity, Thomas recurs to the non-Aristotelian solution.

<sup>72</sup> *Scriptum in Sententias* III.13.1.2 q. 1 ad 3, 3: 402. See also *Summa theologiae* III.7.2 ad 3, *Opera omnia* 11: 108, where Thomas solves the problem by construing magnificence as contempt of riches.

the internal choice (of the will), which does not require any fortunes. Thomas goes beyond Albert: a poor person can even do external acts of magnificence. Though he cannot do magnificent acts that are great simply speaking, he can do relatively great acts.<sup>73</sup>

Unfortunately, Thomas does not spell out how his comments on magnificence apply to magnanimity. What change would have to occur, in Thomas's opinion, so that a modest person (*temperatus*, σώφρων) may become magnanimous? If magnanimity consists merely in aiming at something great while doing an act of virtue,<sup>74</sup> it seems that every virtuous person can act magnanimously. Does not the modest person have a sufficient basis to be magnanimous, without any external change, if he only tries hard enough? Aquinas attributes to Aristotle the view that magnanimity requires the goods of fortune, referring to a passage where the Stagirite seems merely to report a popular opinion.<sup>75</sup> Possibly Thomas takes the Philosopher to hold that, like the change from generosity to magnificence, so the change from moderation to magnanimity requires certain external conditions, among which is the attainment of goods of fortune.

#### *The Portrait According to the Sententia and the Summa*

In the *Sententia*, Thomas seems more concerned with presenting the character traits of Aristotle's portrait in a systematical way than with discussing them. He goes through them one by one, grouping them together according to different general characteristics and putting them consistently in a good light. Humility draws only a small gloss which is analogous to the one found in Albert's *Super Ethica*. In order to ward off any suspicion that Aristotle intends to say that all humble people are flatterers, Aquinas adds a restrictive relative clause: "all humble people who are low-spirited are flatterers".<sup>76</sup>

Two noteworthy comments are his explanation of the magnanimous person's attitude towards receiving gifts and his gloss on contempt. That the magnanimous keep their own good deeds in mind, while forgetting the goods they have received, is a matter of disposition (*ex*

<sup>73</sup> *Summa theologiae* II.II.134.3 ad 4, *Opera omnia* 10: 93.

<sup>74</sup> See above, note 57.

<sup>75</sup> *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.8 s.c., *Opera omnia* 10: 69, quoting *EN* 4.3 (1124a20–21).

<sup>76</sup> *SLE* 4.8, p. 235: "omnes humiles, qui scilicet sunt abiecti animi, sunt blanditores".

*dispositione*), not of choice (*ex electione*), Thomas explains.<sup>77</sup> By choice, the magnanimous, far from forgetting the benefits received, are intent on repaying them with greater gifts. By disposition, however, they remember more frequently the good they have done than that which they have received, because the former causes them more delight, and one tends to think more often about that which causes delight.<sup>78</sup>

Thomas's remark about contempt is short. He explains that the magnanimous' contempt of others is not a lack of due reverence, but merely the fact that they do not value them other than appropriately.<sup>79</sup>

For a more comprehensive examination of the character traits, we have to turn again to the *Summa*. Apart from the *Sed contra* which contains a biblical quotation, the third article of quaestio 129 discusses exclusively points from *EN* 4.3. Objections 3–5 are concerned with the portrait. The third objection gives Thomas the occasion to make sense of the corporal dispositions of the magnanimous person. The last two objections are most relevant for our purposes. I discuss the fifth objection here and the fourth a bit later.

Five apparently blameworthy traits of Aristotle's portrait are presented in the fifth objection: "First, he is forgetful of the benefactors; second, he is idle and slow of action; third, he employs irony towards the many; fourth, he is unable to live with another; fifth, he rather possesses unproductive than fruitful things". In his reply, Thomas does not say that these characteristics are not blameworthy as such. But "insofar as they characterize the magnanimous person, they are not blameworthy, but rather exceedingly praiseworthy". The leading idea in each of the particular responses is that the attitude of the magnanimous person in the realms of action described by these traits is one of extraordinary greatness. By way of example, I mention Thomas's reply to the first accusation: that he does not remember his benefactors means that he does not like to receive gifts or favors (*beneficia*) without repaying them with greater returns.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> The use of the word 'dispositio' suggests that Thomas wants to give the attitude of forgetting good deeds a weak sense. According to *Summa theologiae* I.II.49.2 ad 3, *Opera omnia* 6: 311, a person can more easily leave behind a *dispositio* than a *habitus*.

<sup>78</sup> *SLE* 4.8, p. 234.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 235.

<sup>80</sup> *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 obj. 5, *Opera omnia* 10: 61: "primo quidem, quod non est memor benefactorum; secundo, quod est otiosus et tardus; tertio, quod utitur ironia ad multos; quarto, quod non potest alii convivere; quinto, quod magis possidet infructuosa quam fructuosa"; *ibid.* ad 5, p. 62: "proprietates illae, secundum quod ad magnanimum pertinent, non sunt vituperabiles, sed superexcedenter laudabiles". Certain seemingly

This response does not go into any depths, as was the case with the analogous one in the *Sententia*. Apparently Thomas did not think there was a true difficulty here. Interestingly, his discussion of gratitude and ingratitude in questions 106–107 of the *Secunda secundae* does not contain a single reference to the magnanimous person's forgetfulness of favors received, although Thomas could have easily integrated such a discussion, if only into the objections.

### *Magnanimity and Humility*

Thomas's only comment on Aristotle's view on humility is a brief discussion in the *Summa*, where he asks why the Philosopher did not discuss this virtue. He says that Aristotle intended to discuss the virtues in as much as they belong to the political domain (*secundum quod ordinantur ad vitam civilem*). Humility is not part of the political domain, for it is not concerned with the subordination of human persons to each other, but to God.<sup>81</sup>

Although its discussion is not demanded by the *Nicomachean Ethics*, there is nevertheless a sense in which Aristotle calls for reflections about humility. The fourth objection of the article discussed earlier argues that magnanimity is opposed to humility because the magnanimous think themselves worthy of great things and despise others. Thomas's reply is a development of Albert's solution. The magnanimous person dignifies himself in accordance with the gifts he has received from God. If he has received great strength of soul, knowledge, fortune, or other goods, he will use them to achieve perfect acts of virtue. There is thus a basis of true self-esteem in Thomas's solution, for he stresses the person's own contribution to the value he or she has.<sup>82</sup> The magnanimous person does not have contempt for other persons as such, but only insofar as they are deficient with regard to the gifts of God.<sup>83</sup> Humility, by contrast, leads one to honor the others and to

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reprehensible character traits of the portrait are also discussed elsewhere in Aquinas's works, see e.g. *Scriptum in Sententias* II.42.2.4 ad 4, 2: 1082 ("magnanimus non est admirativus"); *Summa theologiae* II.II.47.9 ad 3, *Opera omnia* 8: 357 ("magnanimus dicitur esse piger et otiosus").

<sup>81</sup> *Summa theologiae* II.II.161.1 ad 5, *Opera omnia* 10: 293.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Gauthier, *Magnanimité*, 463.

<sup>83</sup> Thomas does not say explicitly whether this deficiency is due to personal fault or to the *condicio humana*, i.e., the weakness of the human nature that is not caused by

consider them superior with regard to the gifts received from God. Humble persons think lowly of themselves when considering their own defects.<sup>84</sup>

Here the question was explicitly how the Aristotelian notion of magnanimity can be reconciled with humility. Elsewhere in his theological works, Thomas elaborates on magnanimity without special attention to Aristotle. The compatibility of magnanimity with humility is not in the least problematic, because both virtues have the same object: the desire of a *bonum arduum*. Thus magnanimity and humility are virtues that moderate the passion of hope (the desire for the *bonum futurum arduum possibile*).<sup>85</sup> For how they do so, Thomas gives two different explanations. First he says that magnanimity sustains the desire for a *bonum arduum* according to right reason, thereby warding off desperation, whereas humility tempers such desire when hope risks to turn into presumption. Shortly afterwards, he pays attention to the fact that it is the matter of one and the same virtue to sustain and to temper the pursuit of an object. Accordingly, he modifies the previous explanation: magnanimity orders the passions of hope *and* despair with view to the attainment of one's own good, whereas humility orders them out of submission to God.<sup>86</sup> This doctrine is of course not meant to be an interpretation of Aristotle. It is evidence, however, that Aquinas does not hesitate to integrate the virtue of magnanimity into his taxonomy of virtues, where humility plays an important role.

### Conclusion

The first Latin commentators on Aristotle's account of magnanimity are admirable from two perspectives: as interpreters and as thinkers who go beyond Aristotle. From the first point of view, there are some manifest weaknesses, in particular in Albert's explanations, but also some genuine contributions that deserve being taken seriously. Albert

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personal sin. If he intends the second case, it would seem more appropriate to pity a person than to contempt her or him.

<sup>84</sup> *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 ad 4, *Opera omnia* 10: 62; see also *Scriptum in Sententias* III.33.2.1 q. 4 ad 3, 3: 1050–1051.

<sup>85</sup> *Summa theologiae* I.II.40.1, *Opera omnia* 6: 265.

<sup>86</sup> For the first explanation, see *ibid.* II.II.161.1 and 162.1 ad 3, *Opera omnia* 10: 292, 295–296; for the second, see 161.2 obj. 3 and ad 3, p. 295–296. For a discussion of these texts, see Gauthier, *Magnanimité*, 456–460.



unilaterally focuses on the magnanimous' concern with honors and gravely misinterprets the relation between magnanimity and the nameless virtue. Thomas is more methodical in keeping the interpretation of Aristotle distinct from the elaboration of his own contributions. He puts the role of honors into a larger perspective, insisting that the end of magnanimity is not honors but greatness. This allows him to offer an original interpretation of Aristotle's account that solves a number of puzzles still worrying today's commentators, such as the problem of magnanimity's status as a specific virtue and the relation of greatness to honor. Another valuable interpretation is Thomas's contribution to the problem of the large-scale virtues' role regarding the connection of virtues.

From the second perspective, Albert's and Thomas's achievement consists precisely in the transformation of the Aristotelian ideal of magnanimity. By resolving the conflict between humility and magnanimity, they lift the principal obstacle to welcoming Aristotle's account of magnanimity. In addition, they explicitly or implicitly argue for the value of every human being. By excluding from the magnanimous person the pursuit of independence, the sense of superiority, and indifference towards others—central characteristics in Aristotle's account—they can gladly accept whatever else Aristotle teaches about magnanimity. Their charitable interpretation of the portrait is rooted in the stipulation that the magnanimous are at bottom humble persons. Because they take seriously Aristotle's point that magnanimity makes the other virtues greater, Albert and Thomas assume the task of showing in detail that every character disposition in Aristotle's portrait which might have the appearance of vice is in truth a sign of highest virtue.

From the theological perspective, the human person is indeed all the greater to the extent that he or she humbly accepts dependence on God. Dante, who read Aristotle's *Ethics* with the help of Aquinas's *Ethics* commentary,<sup>87</sup> understood this very well. In the *Inferno* he describes the unbaptized magnanimous (*spiriti magni*) of limbo, among whom he finds the most honored Aristotle, as persons of great value (*gente di molto valore*). Their condition far from God nevertheless causes him

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<sup>87</sup> Kenelm Foster provides abundant evidence for Dante's use of Thomas's Aristotelian commentaries, in particular on the *Ethics*, in reading the works of Aristotle, see his "Tommaso d'Aquino", in *Enciclopedia dantesca*, ed. Umberto Bosco (Rome, 1970–1978) 5: 633–634. For direct references to Thomas's *Sententia*, see *Convivio* 2.14.14 and 4.8.1, ed. Franca Brambilla Ageno (Florence, 1995) 1: 136, 306.

consternation.<sup>88</sup> Quite different is the celebratory tone with which he describes their counterpart, the Christian thinkers of the circle of the sun, where Albert and Thomas stand out.<sup>89</sup> It is a tribute that Dante pays to those who transformed Aristotelian magnanimity from the virtue of self-reliance into the twin sister of humility.

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<sup>88</sup> *Inferno* 4. See Fiorenzo Forti, *Magnanimitade: Studi su un tema dantesco* (Bologna, 1977), 19–38.

<sup>89</sup> *Paradiso* 10. See Forti, *Magnanimitade*, 65–69.



AQUINAS'S INTERPRETATION  
OF THE ARISTOTELIAN VIRTUE OF JUSTICE  
AND HIS DOCTRINE OF NATURAL LAW

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If we wish to understand the philosophical significance that Aristotle's newly rediscovered *Nicomachean Ethics* had for the thinkers of the thirteenth century, we have to ask not one question but two. The first is, how did medieval theologians and philosophers interpret the Aristotelian texts that became available to them through the new translations? The second question is, what philosophical use did they make of the material at hand? Everyone who reads both Aquinas's commentaries on Aristotle and his systematic works will find out that the distinction mentioned is not just an invention of Aristotle's modern interpreters; the great Dominican himself was aware of the difference.

Apart from this general statement, however, the exact character of Aquinas's commentaries remains a topic of debate between modern interpreters which has not yet found a definitive solution.<sup>1</sup> This debate concerns especially his explanation of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum*.<sup>2</sup> René-Antoine Gauthier (the editor of the

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<sup>1</sup> See the remarks on the state of the question in Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Initiation à Saint Thomas d'Aquin: Sa personne et son oeuvre* (Fribourg, 1993), 327ff.; Hermann Kleber, *Glück als Lebensziel: Untersuchungen zur Philosophie des Glücks bei Thomas von Aquin* (Münster, 1988), 55–59.

<sup>2</sup> Useful (if sometimes debatable) general remarks about this text, also in comparison with the commentaries by other medieval commentators, can be found in René-Antoine Gauthier, "Saint Thomas et l'Éthique à Nicomaque", in Thomas Aquinas, *Opera omnia iussu Leonis XIII edita* (Rome, 1882–) 48: XXI–XXIV. They should be compared with Vernon J. Bourke, "The *Nicomachean Ethics* and Thomas Aquinas", *St. Thomas Aquinas 1274–1974: Commemorative Studies*, ed. Armand A. Maurer et al. (Toronto, 1974), 239–259. On the meaning of the word *Sententia* see René-Antoine Gauthier, "Praefatio", in Thomas Aquinas, *Opera omnia* 47: 242\*–246\*. The term designates the elucidation of the philosophical content of the commented work, not a word-by-word explanation, called *expositio litterae*. This distinction corresponds in principle to the ancient distinction between  $\theta\epsilon\omega\rho\acute{\iota}\alpha$  and  $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\xi\iota\varsigma$ ; on the meaning of those terms see Richard Sorabji, "The Ancient Commentators on Aristotle", in *Aristotle Trans-*

*Sententia*), Harry Jaffa, Denis M. Bradley, Jean-Pierre Torrell,<sup>3</sup> and others regard this and Aquinas's other commentaries on Aristotle as theological treatises, while Martin Grabmann, Marie-Dominique Chenu, Hermann Kleber, and others tend to understand them as nothing other than attempts to elucidate the *intentio Aristotelis*.<sup>4</sup> The second interpretation seems to ascribe to Aquinas's commentaries what Siger of Brabant considered a "philosophical" perspective. For Siger, though, "proceeding philosophically" (*procedere philosophice*) was just establishing what Aristotle meant, not what is true<sup>5</sup>—a perspective explicitly rejected by Aquinas.<sup>6</sup> This position should not be confused with the thesis of

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formed: *The Ancient Commentators and Their Influence*, ed. Richard Sorabji (London, 1990), 8ff.

<sup>3</sup> René-Antoine Gauthier, "Saint Thomas et l'Éthique", XXIVff.; Harry V. Jaffa, *Thomism and Aristotelianism: A Study of the Commentary by Thomas Aquinas on the Nicomachean Ethics* (Chicago, 1952), esp. 187ff.; Denis J.M. Bradley, *Aquinas on the Twofold Human Good: Reason and Human Happiness in Aquinas's Moral Science* (Washington, 1997), XIff.; Torrell, *Initiation à Saint Thomas*, 333; see also e.g. Franz-Josef Bormann, *Natur als Horizont sittlicher Praxis: Zur handlungstheoretischen Interpretation der Lehre vom natürlichen Sittengesetz bei Thomas von Aquin* (Stuttgart, 1999), 71.

<sup>4</sup> Martin Grabmann, "Die Aristoteleskommentare des heiligen Thomas von Aquin", in id., *Mittelalterliches Geistesleben 1* (München, 1926; repr. Hildesheim, 1984), 283; Marie-Dominique Chenu, *Introduction à l'étude de St. Thomas d'Aquin* (Montreal–Paris, 1974), 173–198, esp. 177: "Le médiéval s'attache certes non seulement à la lettre, mais à l'intentio auctoris... Ainsi, à la différence de l'exégèse moderne, qui s'abstient de faire sienne la pensée de son auteur et n'a pas à dire s'il n'accepte pas, le commentateur médiéval fait sien implicitement le contenu du texte, et, s'il ne l'accepte pas, le dit explicitement"; Kleber, *Glück als Lebensziel*, 130ff.; Albert Zimmermann, *Thomas lesen* (Stuttgart–Bad Cannstatt, 2000), 40: "Das Ziel ist die genaue Rekonstruktion der Gedankenfolge, von der Aristoteles sich leiten ließ... Die Kommentare... dienen... der systematischen Untersuchung und Beantwortung der sachlichen Probleme".

<sup>5</sup> Bonnie Kent, *Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington, 1995), 41, quoting Siger of Brabant, *De anima intellectiva* 3, in id., *Quaestiones in tertium De anima, De anima intellectiva, De aeternitate mundi*, ed. Bernardo Bazán (Louvain, 1972), 83–84: "Quaerimus enim hic solum intentionem philosophorum et praecipue Aristotelis, etsi forte philosophus senserit aliter quam veritas se habeat et sapientia"; see also ibid. 7, p. 101: "quaerendo intentionem philosophorum in hoc magis quam veritatem, cum philosophice procedamus". On Siger's position see Fernand van Steenberghen, *Maître Siger de Brabant* (Louvain, 1977), 229–257. See also Anthony Kenny and Jan Pinborg, "Medieval Philosophical Literature", in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy: From the Rediscovery of Aristotle to the Disintegration of Scholasticism, 1100–1600*, ed. Norman Kretzmann, Anthony Kenny, and Jan Pinborg (Cambridge, 1982), 28ff.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. with Siger's formulations the following statement of Aquinas, *Sententia libri De caelo et mundo* 1.22.8, *Opera omnia* 3: 91: "studium philosophiae non est ad hoc quod sciatur quid homines senserint, sed qualiter se habeat veritas rerum". Also in other places, Aquinas stresses the Averroists that philosophy has to strive for the truth. See *De unitate intellectus contra Averroistas* 1, *Opera omnia* 43: 291: "Intendimus autem

James C. Doig, who understands the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* not only as a philosophical interpretation but as Aquinas's own "final and most mature statement of moral philosophy", i.e., as a philosophical treatise.<sup>7</sup>

Among the authors who regard the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* as a theological work, one can distinguish two different theses. Jaffa, in what is probably the most comprehensive study advocating the "theological" reading, stresses that Aquinas's interpretation of the *Nicomachean Ethics* rests on imputing "non-Aristotelian principles to Aristotle, although treating them as if they were Aristotelian" (of the six principles listed by Jaffa, only the "belief in a divinely implanted 'natural' habit of the moral principles" will be considered in the present study).<sup>8</sup> Following a similar line, Bradley hints at the doctrine of participation as the background for Aquinas's interpretation of the *Ethics*. According to Bradley, this background is theological insofar as man's natural reason is metaphysically dependent on the eternal law of God.<sup>9</sup> While these authors focus on the content of Aquinas's interpretation, other proponents of a "theological" interpretation stress that Aquinas's purpose even in his commentaries on Aristotle is theological, not philosophical. Torrell, for example, states that Aquinas wrote "dans une perspective apostolique"<sup>10</sup>—in this respect following Gauthier, who sees in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* "l'oeuvre d'un théologien désireux de forger l'instrument rationnel qui manifesterà l'intelligibilité de la foi" and defines Aquinas's intention as "faire ce métier de sage qu'il avait choisi, c'était encore dire Dieu".<sup>11</sup> Torrell, Gauthier, and Joseph Owens<sup>12</sup> do not just identify differences in philosophical doctrine between Aristotle's text and Aquinas's interpretation that would depend on theological motives, they also ascribe to him also an intention which one might call "proceeding theologically".

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ostendere positionem predictam non minus contra philosophie principia esse quam contra fidei documenta".

<sup>7</sup> James C. Doig, *Aquinas' Philosophical Commentary on the Ethics: A Historical Perspective* (Dordrecht, 2001), 229; cf. Jean Isaac, "Saint Thomas, interprète des oeuvres d'Aristote", in *Scholastica ratione historico-critica instauranda* (Rome, 1951), 356.

<sup>8</sup> Jaffa, *Thomism and Aristotelianism*, 187.

<sup>9</sup> Bradley, *Aquinas on the Twofold Human Good*, 108–137.

<sup>10</sup> Torrell, *Initiation à Saint Thomas*, 349.

<sup>11</sup> Gauthier, "Saint Thomas et l'Éthique", XXIV.

<sup>12</sup> Joseph Owens, "Aquinas as Aristotelian Commentator", in *St. Thomas Aquinas 1274–1974*, 213–238.

Only through a close reading of this important commentary can one hope to arrive at a better understanding of its character. In this way one can challenge the reduction of Aquinas's enterprise to either simply establishing the *intentio Aristotelis* or to presenting a principally theological re-interpretation of Aristotle's work. The present article will contribute by examining Aquinas's explanation of the Aristotelian theory of justice in the fifth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Other studies have used the concept of happiness to advance our understanding of the *Sententia libri Ethicorum*.<sup>13</sup> While they may help to clarify the overall structure of the commentary, they neglect Aquinas's treatment of other important themes in Aristotelian ethics. Prominent among these are what Aquinas regards as naturally acquired virtues, which are more independent of theological premises than the question of happiness.<sup>14</sup>

The virtue of justice is for several reasons especially interesting. First of all, justice is to Aristotle of central philosophical significance, because it can be regarded in a certain sense as the most important of the so called ethical virtues.<sup>15</sup> Second, justice had already received by Aquinas's time a lot of different philosophical explanations, many of which were virtually independent of what Aristotle said in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.<sup>16</sup> Thus one may ask how this material influenced Aquinas's interpretation. Last but not least, the subject of justice was of special interest to Aquinas himself, because it had close relationships with the organisation of human societies and the theory of natural law.<sup>17</sup> Both subjects were salient traits of Aquinas's own ethical theory, and his doctrine of natural law is also a crucial element of Jaffa's and Bradley's claim that Aquinas reads Aristotle from a theological point

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<sup>13</sup> Kleber, *Glück als Lebensziel*, 72–131; Bormann, *Natur als Horizont sittlicher Praxis*, 62–72; but see Jaffa, *Thomism and Aristotelianism*, who concentrates on the doctrine of natural law. See also Bonnie Kent, "Justice, Passion, and Another's Good: Aristotle Among the Theologians", in *Nach der Verurteilung von 1277: Philosophie und Theologie an der Universität von Paris im letzten Viertel des 13. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Jan A. Aertsen, Kent Emery, and Andreas Speer (Berlin–New York, 2001), 704–718.

<sup>14</sup> Wolfgang Kluxen, *Philosophische Ethik bei Thomas von Aquin* (Darmstadt, 1998), 220.

<sup>15</sup> See also Kent, "Justice, Passion, and Another's Good", 704–706.

<sup>16</sup> For a useful survey see Stefan Lippert, *Recht und Gerechtigkeit bei Thomas von Aquin: Eine rationale Rekonstruktion im Kontext der Summa theologiae* (Marburg, 2000), 27–73.

<sup>17</sup> There are not many studies on Aquinas's theory of justice; for a survey, see *ibid.*, 3–13. Lippert's own work does not matter very much for the present question, because he concentrates on the *Summa theologiae*. Gabriele Chalmeta, *La giustizia politica in Tommaso d'Aquino: Un' interpretazione di bene commune politico* (Rome, 2000), attempts to reconstruct Aquinas's theory of justice as influenced by "Aristotelian utilitarianism" and "Augustinian contractualism".

of view. Aquinas's interpretation of justice in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* may therefore clarify his understanding of the relationship between his central doctrine of natural law and an Aristotelian philosophical ethics.

In what follows I will focus on those passages in Aquinas's commentary on book 5 that do not have exact foundations in Aristotle's text. I shall compare these passages to texts, especially in the second part of the *Summa theologiae*, where Aquinas develops his own account of justice, natural law and right. The function Aquinas ascribes to his *Sententia libri Ethicorum* becomes clearer when he feels himself entitled, perhaps even obliged, to add some personal insights to what Aristotle says. The character of those additions helps one distinguish between philosophical or theological doctrines he finds, at least implicitly, in this part of the *Nicomachean Ethics* and doctrines about justice found in the *Summa theologiae* which Aquinas does not trace back to Aristotle.

I do not assume that the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* was written either before or after any particular part of the *Summa theologiae*.<sup>18</sup> I take textual differences to reflect differences between literary genera rather than as evidence of development in Aquinas's thought. Thus my observations here are not intended to help in dating the *Sententia*, let alone to resolve scholarly debate on the topic.

### 1. *The treatment of justice in the Sententia libri Ethicorum and the Secunda secundae*

Let me note at the outset that Aquinas is quite sensitive to the specific character of justice in comparison with the other virtues mentioned in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. One can detect, however, some shifts of emphasis in comparison with Aristotle's text. One such shift concerns Aristotle's remark that everyone uses the word 'justice' to mean "the sort of state that makes people disposed to do just things, which makes them act

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<sup>18</sup> According to Gilles Emery and Ruedi Imbach, "Katalog der Werke des Thomas von Aquin", in Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Magister Thomas: Leben und Werk des Thomas von Aquin* (Freiburg–Basel–Vienna, 1995), 357, the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* was written at the same time as the *Secunda secundae*. On the contrary, Doig, *Aquinas' Philosophical Commentary*, 195–229, argues that at least some parts of the *Sententia* are later than the parallel passages in the *Secunda secundae*. Personally, I tend to accept the conclusions of Bourke, "The *Nicomachean Ethics* and Thomas Aquinas", esp. 255: The *Sententia libri Ethicorum* "was done at Orvieto in the years 1261–1264... There is no convincing argument for delaying the initial composition of this *Commentary on the Ethics* to the second Paris period".



justly and wish for what is just” (*EN* 5.1, 1129a7–9). Here Aquinas calls the *habitus* (Greek ἕξις) an *inclinatio*, i.e. a general striving towards an end. The word *inclinatio* reminds readers familiar with Aquinas’s ethics of the *inclinaciones naturales* which have a crucial role in his theory of natural law (see *Summa theologiae* I.II.94.2).<sup>19</sup> The Latin translation *volunt iusta* of the Greek βούλονται τὰ δίκαια gives Aquinas the opportunity to point out that the subject of justice is the will (*voluntas*), a faculty which did even not exist in Aristotle’s own psychology. In Aquinas’s system of psychological faculties *voluntas* is defined clearly enough as *appetitus rationalis*, the capacity for willing some end in a way dictated by reason. Indeed, the understanding of justice as a will is the starting point of the definition which Aquinas prefers in his own treatise on justice in the *Secunda secundae* of his *Summa theologiae*: justice is “the perpetual and constant will to render to each one his right” (*iustitia est perpetua et constans voluntas ius suum unicuique tribuendi*). This definition, quoted at the beginning of Justinian’s legal collection, the *Institutiones*, was understood in the medieval tradition as defining the central function of justice as the goodness of man’s will.<sup>20</sup> Following this tendency, Aquinas sees in the Latin translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics* confirmation that such an approach is not alien to Aristotle himself.

One should note at this point how far Aquinas’s interpretation departs from what Aristotle, according to at least one modern interpretation, had in mind. David O’Connor thinks that Aristotle would see justice, as described in book 5, only as “symptomologically”, not “actiologically” different from the other virtues, i.e. as a special description (regarding the relation of the virtuous man to the community) of the same virtues already described in books two to four. Thus it would not make sense to ascribe to justice a subject of its own and to sepa-

<sup>19</sup> For a useful overview about different interpretations of this crucial notion see Bormann, *Natur als Horizont sittlicher Praxis*, 219–236.

<sup>20</sup> Surveys of medieval definitions of justice before Aquinas can be found in Thomas Graf, *De subiecto psychico virtutum cardinalium secundum doctrinam scholasticorum usque ad medium saeculum XIV* (Rome, 1934); see esp. p. 254 on justice’s subject: “fere unanimis traditio tenet illud... esse... vel rationem... vel liberum arbitrium secundum quod voluntas est. Apud omnes actus iustitiae... (est) ergo actus superioris partis animae”; Odon Lottin, *Psychologie et morale aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles* (Gembloux–Louvain, 1942–1960) 3: 284–299; and for the twelfth century, István P. Bejczy, “Law and Ethics: Twelfth-Century Jurists on the Virtue of Justice”, *Viator* 36 (2005), esp. 204–209, who concentrates on the ethical statements of jurists. For Peter Abelard see also Matthias Perkams, *Liebe als Zentralbegriff der Ethik bei Peter Abaelard* (Münster, 2001), 224.

rate it ontologically from the other virtues.<sup>21</sup> This interesting interpretation suggests that conceptual changes between Aristotle's time and Aquinas's might have influenced Aquinas's understanding of Aristotle. The widespread association of justice with the will in the Middle Ages must have suggested strongly to Aquinas, as it did to Albert, that Aristotle ascribed justice to the will, not just to man's relations with other people. On the other hand, as Bonnie Kent has shown, Godfrey of Fontaines criticized Aquinas's interpretation of Aristotle on much the same grounds that O'Connor does.<sup>22</sup>

In a similar vein, Aquinas explains that the Aristotelian formulation does not relate justice to nonrational passions.<sup>23</sup> Aquinas had already stressed at the very beginning of his exposition of book 5 that Aristotle shifts here from those moral virtues which concern passions (*de virtutibus moralibus, quae est circa passiones*) to the virtue of justice, which concerns actions (*de virtute iustitiae quae est circa operationes*).<sup>24</sup> As an interpretation of Aristotle, this treatment is not exactly self-evident. Aristotle asks at the beginning of book 5 about justice and injustice "what sort of action they relate to" (Περὶ δὲ δικαιοσύνης καὶ ἀδικίας σκεπτέον, περὶ ποίας τυγχάνουσιν οὔσαι πράξεις);<sup>25</sup> but he does not stress that the relation to actions is a peculiar trait of justice. For Aquinas, whose interpretation seems to be inspired by a remark of his teacher Albert the Great,<sup>26</sup> justice differs from other ethical virtues in its relation to actions. This difference is not made clear earlier in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum*. Indeed, Aquinas says in interpreting 2.3 (1104b3–11) that

<sup>21</sup> David K. O'Connor, "The Aetiology of Justice", in *Essays on the Foundations of Aristotelian Political Theory*, ed. Carnes Lord and David K. O'Connor (Berkeley etc., 1991), 136–164. This essay contradicts other recent studies on justice in Aristotle, notably Bernard Williams, "Justice as a Virtue", in *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics*, ed. Amélie Oksenberg Rorty (Berkeley etc., 1980), 189–199. See also n. 28.

<sup>22</sup> Kent, "Justice, Passion, and Another's Good", 713–715.

<sup>23</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 5.1, *Opera omnia* 47: 265.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* p. 264. This sharp distinction between justice and the other virtues is the starting point of what Kent, "Justice, Passion, and Another's Good", 705ff., calls his "dichotomous" reading of book 5. A similar understanding of the virtue of justice is advocated today by Philippa Foot, "Virtues and Vices", in ead., *Virtues and Vices and Other Essays in Moral Philosophy* (Berkeley etc., 1978), 9ff., and Gregory W. Trianovsky, "Virtue, Action, and the Good Life", *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 68 (1987), esp. 127–130. Again, it is criticized by O'Connor, "The Aetiology of Justice", 146, as being non-Aristotelian.

<sup>25</sup> The English translations are taken from Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Christopher J. Rowe and Sarah Broadie (Oxford, 2002).

<sup>26</sup> Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 5.1 (362), ed. Wilhelm Kübel, *Opera omnia* (Münster, 1951–) 14: 306.

every ethical virtue has a relation to actions. Any action performed by a virtuous man is different from the same action performed by someone who has not acquired the virtue in question: while the first one feels happy doing this action, the second one does not do so. “And therefore such actions have some sadness with them” (*Et ideo tales operationes habent aliquam tristitiam admixtam*).<sup>27</sup> Consequently, Aquinas has to explain at the beginning of his lectures on book 5 exactly how justice differs in this respect. His explanation is that the other virtues are important insofar as man is touched internally by passions, but they relate only indirectly to actions. Justice, however, directly concerns our actions and only indirectly our mental dispositions.<sup>28</sup>

The same answer to this question is given by Aquinas in his early commentary on the *Sententiae* of Peter Lombard.<sup>29</sup> In the *Secunda secundae*, however, he only asks whether justice concerns the passions and answers the question affirmatively (II.II.58.9). He does not ask whether justice is about actions, and he states only in answering the second objection of the article that “external actions are rather the subject of justice than of the other moral virtues” (*operationes exteriores magis sunt materia iustitiae quam aliarum virtutum moralium*). This is a relatively restricted statement in comparison with the clear position of both the *Ethics* and the *Sententiae* commentaries, especially if one takes into account that there is no solid base in Aristotle’s text for the doctrine in question. This difference is conspicuous if we follow the usual assumption that the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* and the *Secunda secundae* are more or less contemporary, postdating the commentary on the Lombard’s *Sententiae* by around twenty years. It may be due to the different approach Aquinas chooses in the *Secunda secundae*, where he starts his treatment of justice, preceded by a treatment of right (*ius*, q. 57), by discussing the juridical definition of justice mentioned above. In defining justice as “the perpetual and constant will to render to each one his

<sup>27</sup> *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 2.3, p. 83.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* 5.1, p. 264.

<sup>29</sup> *In quattuor libros Sententiarum* III.33.3.4a, *Opera omnia*, ed. Roberto Busa, 7 vols. (Stuttgart–Bad Canstatt, 1980) 1: 390: “iustitia in hoc differt a temperantia et fortitudine, quod illae moderant passiones intrinsecas, sed iustitia moderat extrinsecas operationes” (= *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum*, ed. Pierre F. Mandonnet and M. Ferdinand Moos [Paris, 1929–1947] 3: 1095–1096, reading “intrinsic operationes”); *ibid.* IV.15.1.1b ad 2, 1: 502 (= *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* 4: 646): “quamvis iustitia sit principaliter circa operationes, tamen etiam ex consequenti est circa passiones, in quantum sunt operationum causae”. I regard this parallel as a possible argument for the dating proposed by Vernon J. Bourke, see n. #18#.

right”<sup>30</sup> Aquinas places it in a perspective dominated from the outset by its relation to acts, and not by its being a virtue in the Aristotelian sense. This perspective on justice is introduced in the *Secunda secundae* only secondarily, framed by remarks concerning the juridical definition. Aquinas states in the first article of question 58 that the Aristotelian definition—“justice is a habit whereby a man is said to be capable of doing just actions in accordance with his choice” (*iustitia est habitus secundum quem aliquis dicitur operativus secundum electionem iusti*)—is equivalent to the juridical definition if it is understood correctly. In the following articles he discusses questions referring to Aristotle’s theory: is justice always towards another? Is it a virtue? Is it a general virtue? Is there a particular justice? And, after that: is it about passions or only about actions? It seemed to Aquinas not at all problematic that justice should be about actions; he needed only to explain that Aristotle was not wrong in stressing that it is not principally about passions.

These clarifications are not only important for understanding why Aquinas does not express himself as clearly in the *Secunda secundae* as he does in the *Ethics* commentary about the relation of justice to actions or to passions. They are also fundamental for the present enquiry insofar as they show that Aquinas had a special perspective on justice which differed to some extent from Aristotle’s own approach. For Aquinas, justice is linked essentially with questions about how man should act or, to put it somewhat differently, about the rules by which human actions should be directed. This is important from a systematic point of view. The treatment of justice provides an opportunity to transcend the more strictly defined realm of virtue ethics and forge a link to the ethics of actions, which is not central to Aristotle, who focuses mainly on virtuous behaviour as a member of one’s own political community.

## 2. *The doctrine of natural right in the Sententia on Nicomachean Ethics 5*

Aquinas’s position on the subject of justice is obviously not so much influenced by this problem as it is by his idea of a natural or positive law determining the rules of ethical behaviour. This shift has at its base important historical developments between Aristotle and Aquinas: not

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<sup>30</sup> *Summa theologiae* II.II.58.1 obi. 1, *Opera omnia* 9:9. The English translations from the *Summa theologiae* are taken from Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (London, 1920–1932).

only the Decalogue, which postulates actions rather than virtues, but also the Stoic theory of a universal rational law which is spelled out by Cicero and which deeply influenced Christian theologians.<sup>31</sup> The role that law (*lex*) plays for Christian thinkers is accordingly quite complex. They must explain the typical traits and the actual validity of such different forms of law as God's eternal law, the natural law, the positive laws of the juridical tradition, the Jewish law of the Old Testament and, of course, the new law given by Christ.

Note that Aquinas focusses mainly on the functions of reason as the natural law which governs man's actions and which makes him independent, to a certain degree, of the norms prevalent in his own society. This interest is very conspicuous in the natural law treatise in the *Prima secundae*, and it is confirmed by the fact that Aquinas begins his treatise on justice with a question on right that recapitulates the main points of the natural law treatise. The following remarks will make it clear that this perspective also influences Aquinas's reading of book 5 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Important in this respect is first of all the Aristotelian distinction between legal or common justice (*iustitia legalis*), which embraces in some sense all virtues, and the specific virtue of justice (*iustitia particularis*), as distinguished from the other specific moral virtues such as fortitude and temperance.<sup>32</sup> Aquinas states correctly that Aristotle is primarily interested in distinguishing particular justice from both legal justice and the other particular virtues.<sup>33</sup> Aquinas himself, though, seems more interested in general aspects of the universal justice which relates to law. This is evident even from the structure of the treatise on justice in the *Secunda secundae*, which starts by defining a universal, legal justice (II.II.58.1), while discussing whether there is a particular justice only relatively late in the question (II.II.58.7).

In the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* Aquinas pays special attention to passages where Aristotle treats the relation of justice to more or less universal laws. This can be seen already in the second chapter of Aquinas's commentary on book 5, where he deals with Aristotle's remark "that

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<sup>31</sup> Lottin, *Psychologie et morale* 2: 11–23; Gerald Verbeke, *The Presence of Stoicism in Medieval Thought* (Washington, 1983), 46 ff.; Maximilian Forschner, "Über natürliche Neigungen: Die Stoa als Inspirationsquelle der Aufklärung", in *Die Trennung von Natur und Geist*, ed. Rüdiger Bubner, Burkhard Gladigow, and Walter Haug (Munich, 1990), 103–106; Lippert, *Recht und Gerechtigkeit bei Thomas von Aquin*, 55–60.

<sup>32</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 5.1, pp. 264, 266.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* p. 264.

everything in accordance with law is in a way just” (ὅτι πάντα τὰ νόμιμα ἔστί πῶς δίκαια). The expression “in a way”—Greek πῶς, Latin *aliqua*—is explained by a passage in the third book of Aristotle’s *Politics* that discusses the different degrees of justice which can be attained by different forms of government (*Politica* 3.7, 1280a7–1281a10). From a methodological point of view this is a totally sufficient explanation: Aquinas uses another Aristotelian text to explain the exact meaning of the text in question. In the commentary on the fifth book, however, such a reference to another work of Aristotle is an exception. Why does Aquinas quote it when explaining the νόμιμον δίκαιον? He apparently wishes to emphasise the different value of laws which are valid in different types of state: “Not in every state, however, there is an absolute right (*iustum simpliciter*), but in some states there exists only a right in some respect (*iustum secundum quid*)”.<sup>34</sup> Such a “right in some respect”, Aquinas continues, is any positive law that depends on a certain legislator.<sup>35</sup> What Aquinas has in mind is less Aristotle’s political theory than his own classification of positive laws, depending on their relation to a natural law that binds all human beings. This general law offers objective standards according to which positive laws can and should be evaluated. Aristotle’s *Politics* helps to support Aquinas’s aim to understand the *Nicomachean Ethics* from this standpoint.

This perspective receives further support from the exposition of 5.6 (1134a35–b1). Here Aristotle states that, because of man’s inclination towards unjust actions, “we do not allow a human being to rule, but rather rational principle”, Aquinas’s explanation of this sentence again introduces elements of his theory of law which cannot be found in the text, at least in this form. He explains the sentence that no man will be allowed to rule by the necessity that no state be governed “according to human wills and passions”. The λόγος that is allowed to rule is nothing other than the law itself, “which is a dictate of reason or a human being acting according to reason” (*lex quae est dictamen rationis vel homo qui secundum rationem agat*).<sup>36</sup> Here Aquinas introduces the assumption that the domination of rationality is nothing other than law within man, in contrast to the arbitrariness of the passions: reason is a law which

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. 5.2, p. 268: “Non autem in omni politia est simpliciter iustum, sed in quibusdam est iustum solum secundum quid”.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.: “Dicit autem illa esse legalia quae sunt statuta et determinata per legislativam, quae competit legislatoribus, et unumquodque eorum sic determinantur dicimus esse aliqua iustum”.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. 5.11, p. 301.

dictates how man has to act, regardless of his own wishes. Aquinas himself developed this idea, which has its roots in different ancient philosophical traditions, in his natural law treatise. Here he concludes his first answer by saying “that law is something pertaining to reason” (*quod lex sit aliquid pertinens ad rationem*)<sup>37</sup> and elaborates on this idea in the following questions. The casual remark in his *Ethics* commentary reveals that Aquinas read into Aristotle’s text this conception of human psychology and its relation to lawfulness, though Aristotle himself was just pleading for the rationality of law in opposition to the arbitrariness of a tyrant. It is interesting to note that Albert the Great does grasp Aristotle’s point. In his commentary on this passage Albert says only that a fitting, rational man should be elected to govern a state.<sup>38</sup> While he just explains what is necessary to defend Aristotle’s text against some criticisms, Aquinas, who knew Albert’s commentary quite well,<sup>39</sup> finds in the text a deeper systematic point.<sup>40</sup> The best opportunity to make his point clearer Aquinas finds in the seventh chapter of the fifth book. Here Aristotle distinguishes within the politically just between the natural and the legal, answering a question discussed in his own time. Aquinas approaches this text with some general questions of terminology which are again unique within his exposition of book 5, but which find clear parallels in different parts of the *Summa theologiae*.

Aquinas identifies the Aristotelian concept of “just” (δικαιον, *iustum*) with the juridical concept of “right” (*ius*), supporting this identification by a quotation from Isidore of Seville’s *Etymologiae*.<sup>41</sup> Consequently, he discusses the relation of Aristotle’s concept of the “politically just” (πολιτικὸν δικαίον, *politicum iustum*) to the juridical concept

<sup>37</sup> *Summa theologiae* I.II.90.1, *Opera omnia* 7: 149.

<sup>38</sup> Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 5.9 (414), p. 352.

<sup>39</sup> He had as his disposal even the *Tabulae libri Ethicorum* which included some sort of an index of Albert’s commentary.

<sup>40</sup> Aquinas’s stress on the (supposed) role of reason in the *Nicomachean Ethics* is the starting point for his elaboration of prudence as the virtue connecting knowledge of universal principles, as given by inborn natural law, with actual situations. This doctrine, which is prepared in *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 6 and carried through in *Summa theologiae* II.II.47–51 (see esp. 47.15), cannot be pursued further at this place. See Martin Rhonheimer, *Praktische Vernunft und Vernünftigkeit der Praxis: Handlungstheorie bei Thomas von Aquin in ihrer Entstehung aus dem Problemkontext der aristotelischen Ethik* (Berlin, 1994), 558–592; Christian Schröder, *Praktische Vernunft bei Thomas von Aquin* (Stuttgart etc., 1995), 77–123; Matthias Perkams, “Gewissensirrtum und Gewissensfreiheit: Überlegungen im Anschluss an Thomas von Aquin und Albertus Magnus”, *Philosophisches Jahrbuch* 112 (2005), 39–45.

<sup>41</sup> *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 5.12, p. 304.

of a “civil right” (*ius civile*). According to Aquinas’s explanation, Aristotle designates by the concept of “politically or civilly just” any right exercised within a society, whether natural or positive, whereas jurisprudence uses the concept of “civil right” (*ius civile*) to designate that right which is constituted by a certain society (*quod scilicet civitas aliqua sibi constituit*), focussing not on the exercise but on the cause of this right’s validity.<sup>42</sup> These explanations have close parallels in question 57 of the *Secunda secundae*, where the first article discusses the relation between the specific object of justice that “is called the just, which is the same as right” (*obiectum quod vocatur iustum, et hoc quidem est ius*). The identification of the “politically just” with “civil right” is the base for the second article of the same question, which argues for the distinction between natural right and positive right largely with concepts from the respective portions of Aristotle’s distinctions within the realm of the “politically just.”<sup>43</sup> The comparison of these different texts reveals clearly that Aquinas develops in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* that interpretation of Aristotle’s text which is suited to make it a starting point for the argumentation in the *Secunda secundae*.

In the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* Aquinas continues his clarification of Aristotelian concepts by explaining what “natural right” (*ius naturale*) means. He takes from the text of 1134b19ff. two arguments for distinguishing natural right (τὸ φυσικὸν δίκαιον) from positive right: 1. τὸ πάνταχου τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχον δύναμιν means that law has everywhere the same force and validity, independent of any human institution. 2. καὶ οὐ τῷ δοκεῖν ἢ μὴ means that this form of right has its origins in human nature, insofar as the actions of all human beings are directed by some common principles which are at the same level as the axioms of theoretical reason: evil has to be avoided, nobody is allowed to harm anyone, nobody is allowed to steal, etc. (*malum esse vitandum, nulli esse iniuste nocendum, non esse furandum et similia*).<sup>44</sup> While the first point is clearly enough what Aristotle had in mind, the second argument draws thick conclusions from a relatively thin and vague statement of Aristotle.<sup>45</sup> Aquinas’s “interpretation” is nothing other than a sketch of the dif-

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Especially conspicuous is the relation of *Summa theologiae* II.II.57.2 obi. 1 and ad 1 to *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 5.12, p. 306.

<sup>44</sup> *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 5.12, pp. 304–305; see also *ibid.* 2.4, p. 88.

<sup>45</sup> See Doig, *Aquinas’ Philosophical Commentary*, 253. Bormann’s statement “In dieser Einschätzung der natürlichen Güter scheint mir kein wesentlicher Unterschied zwischen der aristotelischen und der thomasischen Moraltheorie zu bestehen” (*Natur als*



ferentiated theory of natural law developed in his natural law treatise. Some paragraphs later in his commentary he adds some further details of this theory. That no one should be harmed he treats as a fundamental rule of natural law, but that no one should steal he treats as a logical consequence (*conclusio*) of this basic rule. Thus the prohibition of theft belongs to natural law, because it is valid in all human societies, but only as a secondary rule.<sup>46</sup>

When we compare this account to Aquinas's detailed explanation of the subject in questions 94 and 95 of the *Prima secundae*, we find that he gives in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* a brief overview of the most important points of his ideas about natural law and ascribes them to Aristotle—though the Stagirite does not even use the word 'nature' in the half-line that Aquinas purports to be interpreting. Furthermore, Aquinas's understanding of the Aristotelian πολιτικὸν δίκαιον has close parallels with his concept of natural right, as discussed in *Summa theologiae* II.II.57. Thus the text of the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* confirms that Aquinas even late in his life did not distinguish sharply between *ius naturale* and *lex naturalis*.<sup>47</sup> Obviously, Aquinas was very interested in the systematic doctrine of a rationally founded natural law, so that he interpreted any doctrine of right at his disposal according to the lines of natural law theory. One can reasonably doubt whether Aquinas's interpretation of this topic in the *Sententia* is in complete accordance with what Aristotle had in mind.<sup>48</sup> But thus far there are no reasons for understanding as theological the whole doctrine of natural law, whose roots lie in Stoic philosophy, and its application in the *Sententia*.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that Aquinas does not explain all details of his natural law theory in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum*. For instance, he does not refer to the difference between the first and second example given in his commentary, i.e. the relation between avoiding evil and not harming anybody. According to the crucial text

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*Horizont sittlicher Praxis*, 239) may be true regarding the function of a situative practical reason, but surely not regarding the doctrine of natural law.

<sup>46</sup> *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 5.12, pp. 305–306; see also *Summa theologiae* I.II.94.2–5 and 95.2, *Opera omnia* 7: 169–173, 175.

<sup>47</sup> Bormann, *Natur als Horizont sittlicher Praxis*, 266–268.

<sup>48</sup> In this respect, not in his conclusions regarding Aquinas's theological standpoint, Jaffa, *Thomism and Aristotelianism*, 174–176, is surely right. See also Horst Seidl, "Natürliche Sittlichkeit und metaphysische Voraussetzung in der Ethik des Aristoteles und Thomas von Aquin", in *The Ethics of St. Thomas Aquinas*, ed. León J. Elders and Klaus Hedwig (Vatican City, 1984), 109–111; Rhonheimer, *Praktische Vernunft*, 573 n. 126.

from the *Summa theologiae*, “the first precept of law is that good is to be done and pursued, and evil is to be avoided” (*primum principium legis quod bonum est faciendum et malum est vitandum*), while the principle that no one should be harmed must be regarded as one of the first and immutable natural principles by which reason knows what is generally good or bad and is therefore to be done or to be avoided.<sup>49</sup> From a systematic point this is an important clarification of the foundations of natural law.<sup>50</sup> Aquinas probably does not refer to this distinction in the *Sententia* on book 5 because he finds in Aristotle’s formulation καὶ οὐ τῷ δοκεῖν ἢ μὴ only the universal and undemonstrable character of certain precepts of natural law, not the internal structure natural law in itself. From a historical point of view, this opinion is correct: the highest precept of reason is indeed a medieval idea which can be traced back at least to Abelard’s interpretation of Rom. 7 and the *Sententiae* of his pupil Robert of Melun.<sup>51</sup> The fact that Aquinas excludes this principle from his explanation of the *Nicomachean Ethics* indicates that he does not intend in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* to give a complete overview of his own ethical theory. Rather he thinks it legitimate to explain the implications of some very short remarks of Aristotle in order to clarify what he takes to be the *intentio* of an author who has in mind a very considerable moral theory.

Aquinas continues his comments with a further terminological clarification. The juridical tradition, he says, understands natural law only as rules concerning both human and non-human animals, such as those about producing and rearing offspring, while it calls typically human forms of right, i.e. the rational rules of behaviour, the “right of the nations” (*ius gentium*), because these rules are recognized in any human

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<sup>49</sup> *Nulli est iniuste nocendum* must be equivalent to *nulli esse malum faciendum*, mentioned in *Summa theologiae* I.II.95.2, *Opera omnia* 7: 175 as the root of the prohibition of killing. The parallel is obvious; probably, Thomas had the text of I.II.95.2 before his eyes when he wrote this passage of the *Sententia libri Ethicorum*. Furthermore, both formulations may be equivalent to *quod alios non offendat cum quibus debet conversari* in *Summa theologiae* I.II.94.2, *Opera omnia* 7: 170. In any case, they should have a similar place within the systematic structure of the natural law of human reason, as explained in that article (I intend to treat this question at greater length elsewhere).

<sup>50</sup> For useful clarifications of this principle see Bormann, *Natur als Horizont sittlicher Praxis*, 210–217; Bradley, *Aquinas on the Twofold Human Good*, 282–288.

<sup>51</sup> Abelard’s formulation, which embraces only the positive statement *bonum est faciendum*, can be found in *Commentaria in epistolam Pauli ad Romanos* 3, ed. Eligius M. Buytaert, CCCM 11: 208. Both the positive and the negative formulations occur in Robert of Melun, *Sententiae* I.II. [o].142, MS Innsbruck, UB 297, f. 120<sup>b</sup>.

society.<sup>52</sup> Aristotle, on the other hand, calls both forms of right *iustum naturale*. This is a nice, courteous comment but with no relation to Aristotle's text, which does not introduce any distinction in the concept of φυσικὸν δίκαιον. Albert the Great stated this point clearly in his *Super Ethica*.<sup>53</sup> Aquinas, however, wishes to explain how the differentiated terminology about law used in the juridical tradition, in itself heavily influenced by Stoic presuppositions,<sup>54</sup> relates to what Aristotle says. He treats the same problem and gives the same solution in *Summa theologiae* II.II.57.3: "Whether the right of nations is the same as natural right" (*Utrum ius gentium sit idem cum iure naturali*). In both the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* and the *Secunda secundae* he discusses one of several different juridical accounts of what *ius naturale* is, namely, the (Pseudo-)Ulpianic definition of Justinian's *Digesta* that only that right is natural which man has in common with other animals.<sup>55</sup> To understand why this question seemed so important to Aquinas, we might compare his interpretation with the one that Albert the Great gives in his *Super Ethica*. According to him, Aristotle means by natural law only those rules which stem from human reason; the precepts which man shares with other animals are not covered by the Aristotelian concept.<sup>56</sup> This is in perfect accord with Albert's general theory of natural law as a pure law of reason.<sup>57</sup> According to Albert, then, Aristotle was speaking only about those precepts which according to the *Digesta* are not natural law, but the law of nations.

Aquinas generally tends to explain the form of natural law as rules dictated by reason, while he understands its content in a very broad way, embracing both natural qualities of any animal and specific rules valid only for man. This is the way he presents natural law in the *Prima secundae* (I.II.94.2, cf. I.II.10.1), where he addresses the problem

<sup>52</sup> *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 5.12, p. 305.

<sup>53</sup> *Super Ethica* 5.11 (418), p. 356: "Hic autem, quia intendit tantum elementa civilium ponere, non oportuit, quod tangeret nisi primas differentias".

<sup>54</sup> Verbeke, *The Presence of Stoicism*, 56ff.

<sup>55</sup> See the note at *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 5.12, p. 305, ll. 49–57. For the importance of Ulpian for Aquinas see Michael B. Crowe, "St. Thomas and Ulpian's Natural Law", in *St. Thomas Aquinas 1274–1974*, 261–282; Lippert, *Recht und Gerechtigkeit bei Thomas von Aquin*, 69 with n. 4.

<sup>56</sup> *Super Ethica* 5.11 (419), p. 357. However, Albert's statement "omne iustum progreditur a ratione, in quantum est ratio, sed non in quantum est natura" should be kept in mind also by all interpreters of Aquinas's theory of natural law.

<sup>57</sup> For Albert's theory of natural law see notably Jörn Müller, *Natürliche Moral und philosophische Ethik bei Albertus Magnus* (Münster, 2001), 222–255.

of exactly what *ius gentium* means (I.II.95.4). In this text, however, he borrows this concept from Isidore of Seville, who defines it in a way similar to the *Digesta*, but indicates through his ordering that *ius gentium* is linked not with natural but with civil law.<sup>58</sup> Aquinas concludes that the law of nations and civil law are parts of positive law, but his definition of *ius gentium* as embracing the conclusions or secondary precepts of natural law suggests that it should also be understood as a part of natural law. Not surprisingly, the term remained problematic for him. While preparing the justice treatise for the *Secunda secundae* he made a fresh start with the help of the pseudo-Ulpianic definition, although it was problematic for defining *ius gentium* as part of natural law. But Aquinas was now prepared to draw the proper conclusions from his own theory, which could only mean that *ius gentium* had to be understood as a part of *ius naturale* (II.II.57.3). He repeats this conclusion in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum*,<sup>59</sup> taking the opportunity to trace it back to Aristotle but without presenting any evidence from the text. Aquinas probably understood Aristotle's remarks on the mutable character of human natural law (1134b28–30) as describing what was called in the juridical tradition *ius gentium* and thus as supporting his own claim that the law of nations is a part of natural rather than positive law.

The same tendency to see elements of his own theory in Aristotle's can also be found in Aquinas's explanation of what Aristotle calls "legally just". After paraphrasing Aristotle's remarks in 1134b20–24, Aquinas says "here, however, one has to take into account" (*est autem hic considerandum*), then adds a rather long explanation of his own theory of natural and positive law as it can be found in the *Summa theologiae* (II.II.57.2, see also I.II.95.4). In the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* he presents the distinction between principles and conclusions of natural law mentioned above, the definition of positive law as law developed by man to apply the natural rules to a peculiar society, and the distinction between rules that are correct developments of natural laws and rules that, by mistake, contradict principles of natural law.<sup>60</sup> While he makes no attempt to find the first distinctions in Aristotle's text (he even mentions that the principle of deducing positive laws from natural

<sup>58</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae sive origines* 5.4–6, ed. Wallace M. Lindsay (Oxford, 1911; repr. 1957).

<sup>59</sup> *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 5.12, p. 305.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*; cf. *Summa theologiae* I.II.95.2, *Opera omnia* 7: 175.

law comes from Cicero's *De inventione*),<sup>61</sup> Aquinas holds that the Stagirite already distinguishes between correct and incorrect translations of natural right into human laws: "this is shown too by Aristotle's examples" (*hoc etiam exempla Aristotelis demonstrant*).<sup>62</sup> This is, however, hardly a correct interpretation. Aristotle in no way suggests that it is a sin to sacrifice the Lacedaimonion hero Brasidas, as Aquinas believes it is. Only a Christian, not a Greek, would accept Aquinas's argument that "it stems from a human mistake that divine honour is given to a man" (*quod honor divinus exhibeatur homini est ex errore humano*).<sup>63</sup> It is surprising that a careful reader like Aquinas disregards the historical context in such an obvious way. Again, we must assume that he wanted to emphasize that Aristotle anticipated the theory of law and right which Aquinas sets out in the natural law treatise of the *Prima secundae* and question 57 of the *Secunda secundae*.

### 3. Conclusions

Our observations on book 5 of the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* show that Aquinas explains in this text mostly just the structure and the formulations of Aristotle's text. There are, however, some digressions concerning questions of special interest to Aquinas himself. These are especially passages where the doctrine of natural law is touched upon. Aquinas repeats some elements of his own theory, apparently being convinced that they are at least implied by the Aristotelian text. In many cases this assumption can clearly be called an *Überinterpretation*. Aquinas goes well beyond explaining the meaning and context of Aristotle's remarks. But this does not mean that these statements are deliberate misinterpretations; rather, Aquinas thinks that the doctrines mentioned are really implications of the text, even if they are not expressly stated.<sup>64</sup> This is indicated by his claims that this or that is really meant by the Aris-

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., referring to Cicero, *De inventione* 2.22.65 and 53ff., ed. Eduard Stroebel (Leipzig, 1915), 160–162.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 306.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., referring to *EN* 5.7, 1134b23ff. The point is stressed, not surprisingly, by Jaffa, *Thomism and Aristotelianism*, 178ff.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Kleber, *Glück als Lebensziel*, 131: "Das dem Prinzip der *intentio auctoris* übergeordnete Interpretationsprinzip der *veritas rei* gebot Thomas, dort über eine aristotelesimmanente und textinterne Erklärung der *Nikomachischen Ethik* hinauszugehen, wo er glaubte, daß die Wahrheit des aristotelischen Textes nur in bezug auf eine umfassendere Wahrheit richtig erkannt werden könne". This "more global truth" does

totelian text and by the fact that he does not quote explicitly any element of his own theory while commenting on Aristotle.

Furthermore, we do not find any hint of theological doctrines in this part of the commentary. Even if we leave open the possibility that Aquinas's own doctrine of happiness leads to a theological *Überformung* of the whole *Sententia libri Ethicorum*, as Kleber and Bormann suggest,<sup>65</sup> this does not affect all parts of the commentary. When Aquinas introduces some non-Aristotelian concepts of natural and positive law in interpreting book 5, he uses juridical and ethical terms; there is no reason to see the theological doctrine of divine law as a necessary background for the *Sententia*, as Jaffa and Bradley do.<sup>66</sup> Even as regards natural law, Thomas does not find all elements mentioned in the *Summa theologiae* in Aristotle's text; probably, he saw them as parts of an ethical theory which had not yet been developed by Aristotle.<sup>67</sup> Thus it seems correct to say neither that Aquinas read all parts of the *Nicomachean Ethics* from a theological perspective, nor that he developed here his own ethical theory in its most mature form. Aquinas's treatment of Aristotle's theory of justice would more appropriately be called a charitable interpretation<sup>68</sup> of philosophical ideas that can be deduced from the text under discussion: he presents what he takes to be Aristotle's opinion, including all theories a sensitive philosophical interpreter should discern in the text.

One might attempt to draw more general conclusions from Aquinas's interpretation of book 5 of the *Ethics*, but they would need to be confirmed by analysing additional passages from the *Sententia libri*

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not consist in the case of justice in a theological perspective, but in a more elaborated doctrine of natural law.

<sup>65</sup> See n. 14.

<sup>66</sup> See above p. 0#2–3#00. As regards the amount of theological doctrines within Aquinas's commentaries, I agree with Owens, "Aquinas as Aristotelian Commentator", 234–238, but my conclusions are different.

<sup>67</sup> This incompleteness does not justify the widespread disregard of the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* often found in modern interpretations of Aquinas's theory of natural law, which tend to focus exclusively on the *Summa theologiae*, e.g. Pauline C. Westermann, *The Disintegration of Natural Law Theory: Aquinas to Finnis* (Leiden, 1998), 21–73; Clifford G. Kossel, "Natural Law and Human Law (Ia IIae, qq. 90–97)", in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, ed. Stephen J. Pope (Washington 2002), 169–193; Jean Porter, "The Virtue of Justice (IIa IIae, qq. 58–122)", *ibid.*, 272–286.

<sup>68</sup> I owe that formulation to a remark of Bonnie Kent in the discussion at the Nijmegen conference; it seems to me a very fitting characterization of Aquinas's art of commenting. Cf. Torrell, *Initiation à Saint Thomas*, 350, who refers to Aquinas's "élan de charité intellectuelle vraie".

*Ethicorum*<sup>69</sup> and from other commentaries on Aristotle written by Aquinas. His commentaries are not systematic treatises pretending to be interpretations; they are interpretations intended to illuminate philosophical points mentioned by Aristotle, some of which Aquinas himself had probably learned from reflecting on Aristotle's text,<sup>70</sup> even before commenting it.<sup>71</sup> Thus Aquinas's commentaries are distinct from both modern commentaries that aim to explain the text strictly as a historical document, and from ancient philosophical commentaries which in most cases aim to develop the correct philosophical theory by explaining a text which is supposed to contain the philosophical truth (even if it is not obvious to readers lacking adequate philosophical formation).<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> A close reading of Aquinas' commentary on book 6 of the *Nicomachean Ethics* has convinced me that he sticks in this case even closer to the text than in the interpretation of book 5.

<sup>70</sup> On the history of Aquinas's acquaintance with Aristotle see Gauthier, "Saint Thomas et l'Éthique", XV–XVIII.

<sup>71</sup> In this sense, Anthony J. Lisska, *Aquinas's Theory of Natural Law: An Analytic Reconstruction* (Oxford, 1996), 84, is not entirely wrong when saying that the texts of the *Summa theologiae* on natural law "are dependent structurally on Aquinas's treatment of Aristotle's moral theory in his" *Sententia*. A much more correct formulation would be, though, that the *Sententia* presupposes Aquinas's own systematic theory as it can be found in the *Summa*.

<sup>72</sup> The best starting point for understanding ancient philosophical commentaries is still Sorabji, "The Ancient Commentators on Aristotle". For more recent literature see Cristina d'Ancona Costa, "From Late Antiquity to the Arab Middle Ages: The Commentaries and the 'Harmony between Plato and Aristotle'", in *Albertus Magnus und die Anfänge der Aristoteles-Rezeption im lateinischen Mittelalter: Von Richardus Rufus bis zu Franciscus de Mayronis*, ed. Ludger Honnefelder, Rega Wood, Mechthild Dreyer, and Marc-Aeilko Aris (Münster, 2005), 45–69; Matthias Perkams, "Das Prinzip der Harmonisierung verschiedener Traditionen in den neuplatonischen Kommentaren zu Platon und Aristoteles", in *Antike Philosophie verstehen / Understanding Ancient Philosophy*, ed. Jörn Müller and Marcel van Ackeren (Darmstadt, 2006), 332–347.

III

THE LATE THIRTEENTH CENTURY





HEROIC VIRTUE IN THE COMMENTARY  
TRADITION ON THE *NICOMACHEAN ETHICS* IN THE  
SECOND HALF OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

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The seventh book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* is set between the treatise on the intellectual virtues (book 6) and the treatise on friendship (books 8 and 9). Book 7 falls into two parts: the first part deals about self-restraint and unrestraint (ch. 1–11), while the second part concerns pleasure (ch. 12–15). In the opening chapter of book 7, Aristotle states that “three are the states of moral character to be avoided”:<sup>1</sup> vice, unrestraint, and brutishness (*kakia*, *akrasia*, *theriotes*). Obviously, the opposite of vice is virtue (*arete*) and the opposite of unrestraint is self-restraint (*enkrateia*); on the contrary, it is not equally evident which state would be the opposite of brutishness. It is, Aristotle states, a virtue which is heroic, divine, and somehow above us.<sup>2</sup> Aristotle does not explain in what exactly this virtue consists, and it is quite easy to realize that this divine virtue does not have a great importance in Aristotelian moral theory. As René-Antoine Gauthier wrote, it seems that Aristotle affirmed the existence of heroic virtue for harmony’s sake: as there is an opposite of vice and of unrestraint, so there must be an opposite of brutishness.<sup>3</sup>

The aim of this paper is to show how the Latin commentators of the *Nicomachean Ethics* of the second half of the thirteenth century read and explained the doctrine of the *virtus heroica*. I will present this subject as it appears in the commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics* by Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, and also in some late thirteenth-century commentaries (once called Averroist) written by Masters of

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I would like to thank István Bejczy for his helpful advice, and Guillaume Navaud for revising the text.

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 7.1 (1145a16–17), trans. Harris Rackham (Cambridge, MA–London, 1934), 375 (slightly modified by me).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* (1145a19–20).

<sup>3</sup> Aristotle, *L’Ethique à Nicomaque*, ed. René-Antoine Gauthier and Jean-Yves Jolif (Louvain-la-Neuve–Paris–Sterling, VA, 2002) 2.2: 583–584.

Arts: the commentaries of Radulphus Brito (also known as the Vatican commentary),<sup>4</sup> Giles of Orléans, and the anonymous of Erlangen. Since I will mainly focus on commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, I will not examine many other texts, in particular theological texts, that could be of great interest to understand the history of heroic virtue; for this reason, my contribution does not pretend to be exhaustive.

Scholars of the Aristotelian tradition of the late thirteenth century often complain about a general lack of originality in Aristotelian commentaries: indeed, it is not easy to find a Master of Arts who had the audacity to formulate original and innovative theories. Commentators of Aristotle in this period commonly preferred to follow an already existing and strengthened tradition. The subject I am going to present nevertheless deserves serious consideration, since in the thirteenth century at least three different theories about the nature of *virtus heroica* co-existed: Albert's theory, Thomas' theory, and the theory of the so-called 'Averroist' commentators of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, that is to say, the Masters of Arts.

According to Aristotle, moral virtue is a disposition (*hexis, habitus*) of the irrational part of the soul, through which the irrational soul operates in conformity or in compliance with right rule (*orthos logos*); the right rule then trains the irrational soul to the choice of a *medium rationis*, medium of the reason; this medium constitutes a moral virtue, while vice is constituted by the extremes of defect and excess. Self-restraint is not a virtue, it is rather a disposition of the rational soul, and not of the irrational soul: if the irrational soul is not trained and educated to the choice of the medium, and rather inclines towards vice (be it one or the other of the two extremes), the rational soul can nevertheless force the irrational soul to follow the right rule and not to operate vicious actions. The main difference between virtue and self-restraint, then, is that while in virtue there is a perfect conformity between the rational and the irrational part of the soul, between the reason and the desire, there is rather a conflict between the two parts of the soul in self-restraint. If the desire and the inclination of the irrational part is at

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<sup>4</sup> For the attribution to Brito, see René-Antoine Gauthier, review of *Psychologie et morale aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles* by Odon Lottin, *Bulletin thomiste* 8 (1947–1953), 83–84. In my doctoral thesis, "Il commento all'*Etica nicomachea* di Radulfo Brito: Edizione critica del testo con uno studio critico, storico e dottrinale" (Ph.D. diss. Università degli Studi di Salerno/Université de Paris IV-Sorbonne, 2007), I offer new evidence confirming Brito's authorship.

the same time against the right rule and so strong as to win the conflict with the rational soul, then we have what Aristotle calls unrestraint: in the case of unrestraint, reason knows which is the right rule, but is not strong enough to force the irrational soul to operate in compliance with it. The difference between the vicious and the incontinent is that while the vicious is convinced that it is necessary and good to satisfy his evil desires, on the contrary the incontinent knows that he is doing what he should not do, but the knowledge of the right rule that he possesses is not imperative.

Brutishness, as Aristotle explains, goes beyond the limits of vice:<sup>5</sup> it is a disposition which consists in enjoying pleasures that are classified by Aristotle as pleasures against nature.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, what distinguishes brutishness from vice and unrestraint is that while pleasures from which the incontinent or the vicious cannot retain are permissible pleasures if not in excess (for example, sexual pleasures and greediness), pleasures of brutishness are, on the contrary, inhuman and brutal (as, for instance, cannibalism).<sup>7</sup>

Heroic virtue being a disposition opposite to brutishness, it has to be a super-human virtue. It is a virtue which is above us, somehow heroic and divine (*huper hemas arete, heroike tina kai theia*): there are men who become gods through the excellence of the virtue (*di'aretas huperbolen*).<sup>8</sup> The nature and the function of this virtue is not clarified hereafter by

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<sup>5</sup> *Ethica nicomachea* 7.6 (1148b15–1149a24); on brutishness in Aristotle's moral thought, see Richard Bodéüs, "Les considérations aristotéliennes sur la bestialité: Traditions et perspectives nouvelles", in *L'animal dans l'antiquité*, ed. Barbara Cassin and Jean-Louis Labarrière (Paris, 1997), 247–258.

<sup>6</sup> *Ethica nicomachea* 7.6 (1148b17–19).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Gauthier's explanation in Aristotle, *L'Éthique à Nicomaque* 2.2: 628: "Pour trouver quelque plaisir dans la satisfaction de ces besoins morbides ou bestiaux dont on nous a parlé, il faut n'être pas un homme, mais se situer tout à fait en dehors des limites du domaine moral, là où les notions de bien et de mal cessent d'avoir une signification". Bodéüs, "Les considérations", 250ff. explains that the similarity between a brutish man and a beast is only metaphorical: it is an analogy rather than a real transformation of a man into a beast. We may anticipate that the same thing could be affirmed, in the case of heroic virtue, about the relationship between human and divine nature: as we will see below, Thomas affirmed about heroic virtue what Bodéüs correctly understood about brutishness.

<sup>8</sup> Rudolf Hofmann, *Die heroische Tugend: Geschichte und Inhalt eines theologischen Begriffes* (Munich, 1933); see also Risto Saarinen, "Virtus heroica: 'Held' und 'Genie' als Begriffe des christlichen Aristotelismus", *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 33 (1990), 96–114; id., "Die heroische Tugend als Grundlage der individualistischen Ethik im 14. Jahrhundert", in *Individuum und Individualität im Mittelalter*, ed. Jan A. Aertsen and Andreas Speer (Berlin–New York, 1996), 450–463.

Aristotle. Most likely, what Aristotle says about heroic virtue represents common beliefs and values of Greek religion rather than a scientific exposition.<sup>9</sup>

### 1. *Albert the Great*

The first complete Latin commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* is the first of the two commentaries written by Albert the Great.<sup>10</sup> It is also the first Latin commentary to discuss book 7 of the *Ethics*, since the earlier commentaries concern either the *Ethica nova* or the *Ethica vetus*.

According to Albert, heroic virtue seems to be neither a moral virtue nor an intellectual virtue, at least if we use the term ‘virtue’ in its appropriate meaning.<sup>11</sup> Sometimes, says Albert, the rational part of the soul can dominate and control the irrational part in such a perfect way that passions are not only dominated, but even destroyed. This condition corresponds to what Albert calls heroic virtue:

but reason weakens the passions while holding man back from them; it is hence able to suppress them to the point of altogether destroying them, and this disposition we call divine virtue.<sup>12</sup>

Heroic virtue is the disposition through which vice is destroyed and virtue is realized in a pure form. The balance and stability of the passions achieved by this disposition makes a man similar to God.<sup>13</sup>

According to Albert, the location of the *virtus heroica* is the human intellect: it is a disposition of the rational part of the soul. From this point of view, heroic virtue is similar to self-restraint, which is, as we have said, a disposition of the rational part, whose task it is to hold

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<sup>9</sup> See Gauthier’s comment in Aristotle, *L’Éthique à Nicomaque* 2.2: 584.

<sup>10</sup> Albert the Great, *Super Ethica*, ed. Wilhelm Kübel, *Opera omnia* (Münster, 1951–) 14. On Albert, see Jörn Müller, *Natürliche Moral und philosophische Ethik bei Albertus Magnus* (Münster, 2001); Martin J. Tracey, “Albert on Incontinence, Continence and Divine Virtue”, in *Das Problem der Willenswäche in der mittelalterlichen Philosophie*, ed. Tobias Hoffmann, Jörn Müller, and Matthias Perkams (Leuven–Paris–Dudley, 2006), 197–220.

<sup>11</sup> Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 7.1 (600), p. 515.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* (603), p. 517: “sed ratio retrahendo hominem a passionibus, debilitat eas; ergo tantum poterit cohibere, quod omnino destruet ipsas, et hanc dispositionem dicimus divinam virtutem”. The translation is mine.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 518: “Sicut enim corpus hominis est simillimum caelo propter aequalitatem complexionis, ita etiam secundum animam potest esse simillimum deo quantum ad aequalitatem passionum”.

human desire back from violent passions and vicious actions.<sup>14</sup> Thus, we come to a point which could appear problematic in Albert's theory, and which could make his explanation seem almost incongruous. Since heroic virtue is not a virtue of the irrational part of the soul, it cannot be considered as a moral virtue; neither can we properly consider it an intellectual virtue, for none of the intellectual virtues has as its proper task to contain and repress the passions in a direct way. The rational soul is divided into a scientific and a calculative part. It is evident that dealing with the passions is not the task of the virtues of the scientific part, that is, intuitive reason, philosophical wisdom, and scientific knowledge; it is also evident that it is not the task of the two virtues of the calculative part, that is, practical wisdom and art, since the proper work of practical wisdom and art is to 'know' objects of action and of production, respectively, and, in case of practical wisdom, to find out the means which realize the aim determined by virtue. That is why Albert is almost forced to describe heroic virtue as a perfect form of self-restraint, although this was plainly not the intention of Aristotle. From the way it is described in his first commentary, one could believe that, according to Albert, heroic virtue is essentially identical to self-restraint (same location, same kind of activity), differing only in its degree of perfection.<sup>15</sup> In my opinion, this difficulty is due to the fact that Albert identified and superposed two distinct doctrines depending on two different sources, that is, the Aristotelian doctrine on *virtus heroica* and Macrobius's doctrine of virtue. It is necessary to recall briefly the theory exposed by Macrobius in order to understand Albert's texts.

In the chapter of his *Commentarium in Somnium Scipionis* in which he examines the four cardinal virtues (*prudentia, iustitia, fortitudo, temperantia*),

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid. (601), p. 516: "Concedimus, quod sunt intellectuales [*sc.* *virtus heroica et continentia*]... quia anima potest considerari aut per essentiam suam, et sic est intellectiva quaedam extra passiones et suppeditans eas sibi, et sic oportet, quod perficiatur anima virtute quadam divina; aut in quantum est anima et motor corporis et sic immiscetur passionibus et compatitur quodammodo eis, et sic oportet quod perficiatur continentia".

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *ibid.* (602), p. 517: "sed ratio perfecte, quantum in ipsa est, retrahit a passionibus; ergo oportet, quod sit perfecta per aliquem habitum, et hanc dicimus continentiam"; (603), p. 517: "sed ratio retrahendo hominem a passionibus, debilitat eas; ergo tantum poterit cohibere, quod omnino destruet ipsas, et hanc dispositionem dicimus divinam virtutem". That the *divinus vir* has to restrain himself from passions is affirmed in the *Summa Alexandrinorum*, ed. Concetto Marchesi, *L'Etica nicomachea nella tradizione latina medievale* (Messina, 1904), LXIX: "Et dicitur de uiro diuino quoniam castus et continens et tolerans eo quod continet se secundum potentiam intellectiuam a concupiscentiis grauis".

Macrobius affirms that he expounds a doctrine formulated by Plotinus.<sup>16</sup> Following the classification of Macrobius, Plotinus distinguished four degrees of virtue. The four cardinal virtues may exist or be possessed as *virtutes politice*, their lowest degree, in which they are practised by man as a social animal; as *virtutes purgatorie*, they enable the philosopher to separate himself from material reality and to aim to divine realities; as *virtutes purgati animi*, they are the achievement and the fulfilment of the *virtutes purgatorie*; finally, the *virtutes exemplares* are the archetypes of the four cardinal virtues as they subsist in the divine *nous*. Among these four degrees of virtues, the third degree of the *virtutes purgati animi* most concerns our enquiry:

The third type includes the virtues of the purified and serene mind, completely and thoroughly cleansed from all taint of this world. In that estate it is the part of prudence not to prefer the divine as though there were any choice, but to know it alone, and to fix one's attention upon it as if there were nothing else; it is the part of temperance not to restrain earthly longings but to forget them completely; it is the part of courage to ignore passions, not to suppress them...; it is the part of justice to be so attached to the divine heavenly Mind as to keep an everlasting covenant with it by imitating it.<sup>17</sup>

In *Super Ethica* 7.1, this degree of virtue is identified by Albert with the Aristotelian *virtutes heroice*: “And these [heroic] virtues are called by Macrobius *purgati animi*, by which one ascends to likeness with God”.<sup>18</sup> This identification appears arbitrary. What Aristotle says about heroic virtue cannot be identified with Macrobius's conception of the *virtutes purgati animi*; in fact, while Aristotle describes heroic virtue simply as an excellence of virtue, Macrobius maintains that passions are ‘forgotten’ or ‘ignored’ (Albert adds: destroyed) by an intellectual pre-eminence. The

<sup>16</sup> Macrobius, *Commentaire au songe de Scipion* 1.8.5–11, ed. Mireille Armisen-Marchetti (Paris, 2001–2003) 1: 51–53. On Macrobius's references to Plotinus see Paul Henry, *Plotin et l'occident: Firmicus Maternus, Marius Victorinus, Saint Augustin et Macrobe* (Louvain, 1934), 147–192.

<sup>17</sup> Macrobius, *Commentaire* 1.8.9, p. 52: “Tertiae sunt purgati iam defaecatique animi et ab omni mundi huius aspergine presse pureque detersi. Illic prudentiae est diuina non quasi in electione preferre, sed sola nosse, et haec tamquam nihil sit aliud intueri; temperantiae terrenas cupiditates non reprimere, sed penitus oblivisci; fortitudinis passiones ignorare, non uincere...; iustitiae, ita cum supera et diuina mente sociari ut seruet perpetuum cum ea foedus imitando”. The English translation is taken from Macrobius, *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, trans. William H. Stahl (New York, 1952), 123.

<sup>18</sup> Albert, *Super Ethica* 7.1 (598), p. 514: “Et has virtutes vocat Macrobius purgati animi, quibus in divinam similitudinem ascendatur”.

idea of ignoring or forgetting passions is not only extraneous to Aristotle's theory of virtue, it is even inconsistent with it: moral virtue, according to the doctrine developed in book 2 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, is a perfection of human desire which has passions as its proper objects; passions, which are naturally in man's desire, are thus a necessary requirement for the existence of moral virtue.<sup>19</sup> Through the mediation of Macrobius, Albert identified, in heroic virtue, Aristotelian *continentia* and the *virtutes purgati animi*. Should we be surprised about this junction? Absolutely not, for what Albert elaborates as heroic virtue, and which consists in a contamination of Aristotelism and Neo-Platonism, resembles to what Christian thought described as *continentia* before the rediscovery of *Nicomachean Ethics* in the Latin West. Aristotle explicitly affirmed that self-restraint (*enkrateia*—*continentia*) was not a virtue, given the lack of conformity between desire and reason which characterizes the continent man; by contrast, the Christian theological tradition saw in self-restraint one of the highest human virtues, mostly related with the virtues of chastity and virginity.<sup>20</sup> It seems possible to affirm that Albert's strategy consists in exploiting a minor concept of Aristotelian

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Gauthier's commentary on *EN* 2.5 (1106b23) in Aristotle, *L'Éthique à Nicomaque* 2.1: 141–142: "On peut donc tenir pour assuré que toutes les vertus,—et pas seulement la justice,—ont pour domaine les activités extérieures, en ce sens qu'elles assurent l'accomplissement d'œuvres pourvues de certaines qualités. Mais elles ne peuvent le faire sans modérer aussi les passions intérieures. C'est bien ce que veut dire Aristote quand il affirme que 'la vertu est ce qui nous fait agir de la plus belle façon dans le domaine des plaisirs et des peines' (2, 1104b27–28): plaisirs et peine sont en effet les passions fondamentales (2, 1104b34, 1105a2–4), qui déterminent le mouvement de désir et, par suite, l'activité extérieure. C'est donc en réglant la passion que la vertu règle l'activité".

<sup>20</sup> St. Paul includes *continentia* among the fruits of the Spirit in Gal. 5:22–23; see also 1 Cor. 7:9. On the conflict between the Christian and Aristotelian conceptions of *continentia*, see e.g. Gauthier's commentary in Aristotle, *L'Éthique à Nicomaque* 2.2: 579; René-Antoine Gauthier, "Trois commentaires 'averroïstes' sur l'Éthique à Nicomaque", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 18 (1947–1948), 300; Roland Hissette, *Enquête sur les 219 articles condamnés à Paris le 7 mars 1277* (Louvain–Paris, 1977), 297–298. It is impossible to study here the history of the concept of *continentia* in Christian theology. However, a text of Augustine deserves to be quoted, as it shows quite well that what Albert describes as *virtus heroica* could be identified with Christian *continentia*. See Augustine, *De continentia* 13.29, ed. Josephus Zycha, CSEL 41: 179: "Spiritus itaque hominis adherens spiritui dei concupiscit aduersus carnem, id est aduersus se ipsum, sed pro se ipso, ut motus illi siue in carne siue in anima secundum hominem, non secundum deum, qui sunt adhuc per adquisitum languorem, continentia cohibeantur propter adquirendam salutem, ut homo non secundum hominem uiuens iam possit dicere: uiuo autem iam non ego, uiuit uero in me Christus [Gal. 2:20]". I do not know if Albert was thinking of this text while commenting on *Nicomachean Ethics* 7.1, but this is not the most important aspect; it is noteworthy that *continentia* as described by Augustine



ethics (heroic virtue) in order to raise up in an Aristotelian context a Christian virtue which Aristotle not only neglected, but even denied to be a virtue.

In his second commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, written about ten years after the first, Albert pays less attention to the *virtus heroica*.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, he confirms the exegesis of his first commentary but includes some interesting ‘historical’ remarks about the origins of the theory of heroic virtue. The doctrine of *virtus heroica*, according to Albert, is a ‘Platonic’ doctrine, since it has been developed by Plato, Plotinus, and the Stoics.<sup>22</sup> In the second commentary, Albert likewise identifies heroic virtues with the Plotinian *virtutes purgati animi*, which he knows through Macrobius; however, he does not explicitly refer to Macrobius in this context. Yet the implicit influence of Macrobius is evident, as Albert, following Macrobius, associates the doctrine of *virtutes purgati animi* with the four cardinal virtues.<sup>23</sup>

## 2. Thomas Aquinas

Thomas’s approach to *virtus heroica* illustrates very well his attitude towards Aristotelian philosophy and its use in a theological context. As I will try to demonstrate, in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* (the literal commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*) Thomas tries to limit himself to a rational exposition of Aristotle’s text and doctrine, while in the *Summa*

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restrains, as in Albert’s *Super Ethica*, irrational and noxious passions and desires in order to make man similar to God.

<sup>21</sup> Albert the Great, *Ethica* 7.1.1, *Opera omnia*, ed. Stephanus C.A. Borgnet (Paris, 1890–1899) 7: 462–464. On this part of the *Ethica*, see Müller, *Natürliche Moral*, 192–198.

<sup>22</sup> Albert, *Ethica* 7.1.1, p. 463b. On the classification of ancient philosophical schools by Albert, see Alain De Libera, “Albert le Grand et Thomas d’Aquin interprètes du *Liber de causis*”, *Revue de sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 74 (1990), 348; id., “Albert le Grand et le Platonisme: De la doctrine des idées à la théorie des trois états de l’universel”, in *On Proclus and His Influence in Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Egbert P. Bos and Pieter A. Meijer (Leiden, 1992), 90. Albert usually classifies Plato among the Stoics.

<sup>23</sup> *Ethica* 7.1.1, p. 464: “isti sunt qui fortitudinem habent super omnem fortitudinem... habent temperantiam super omnem temperantiam... habent iustitiam super omnem iustitiam... habent prudentiam super omnem prudentiam”; cf. the anonymous Greek scholiast in *The Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle in the Latin Translation of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln (†1253)*, ed. H. Paul F. Mercken (Leiden–Louvain, 1973–) 3: 3: “puta cum dirigat quis philanthropiam... super omnem philanthropum... dicitur talis virtus heroica et divina... et cum quis dirigat temperantiam super omnem temperatum... si quis fortis fiat super omnem fortem”.

*theologiae* he exploits the *virtus heroica* in a non-Aristotelian, theological sense.

In the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* we can observe one main difference from Albert's explanation. According to Albert, the disposition produced by the *virtus heroica* represents perfect control of the irrational part of the soul by the rational part. According to Thomas, *virtus heroica* seems rather to be a disposition of the rational part in itself, without any respect to the irrational part:

As the affections of the sensitive part are sometimes perverted in man almost like dumb animals (and this is called brutishness, exceeding human vice and incontinence), so the rational part in man is perfected and formed beyond the usual mode of human perfection after a likeness to separated substances (and this is called a divine virtue exceeding ordinary human virtue and continence).<sup>24</sup>

As this text shows, Thomas clearly differentiates between *continentia* and *virtus heroica*, a state superior both to moral virtue and to continence. In compliance with the intentions of Aristotle, these three states are mentioned in an order which descends from the most perfect to the less perfect (*virtus divina*—*virtus humana*—*continentia*). Contrary to Albert's teaching, Thomas's conception of *virtus heroica* has nothing to do with continence.

As in Albert's commentaries, human nature is described in the *Sententia* as a medium between immaterial and material realities, and from this essential ambivalence human beings receive the possibility to become similar to beasts or similar to angels:

Likewise, then, in human nature there is something that comes into contact with what is above and something that comes into contact with what is below; yes, and something occupies the middle.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 7.1, ed. René-Antoine Gauthier, *Opera omnia* (Rome, 1882–) 47: 381 “sicut ergo affectiones sensitivae partis aliquando in homine corrumpuntur usque ad similitudinem bestiarum et hoc vocatur bestialitas supra humanam malitiam et incontinentiam, ita etiam rationalis pars quandoque in homine perficitur et confortatur ultra communem modum humanae perfectionis, quasi in similitudinem substantiarum separatarum, et hoc vocatur virtus divina supra humanam virtutem et continentiam” (my italics). The translation is taken from Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. C.I. Litzinger (Notre Dame, 1993), 409 (slightly modified by me).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*: “ita enim se habet rerum ordo ut medium ex diversis partibus attingat utrumque extremum, unde et in humana natura est aliquid quod attingit ad id quod est superius, aliquid vero quod coniungitur inferiori, aliquid vero quod medio modo se habet” (translation *ibid.*). On the sources of this topic, see below, n. 42.

But the consequence of the possession of such a pre-eminence or excellence of the rational soul is not the conversion of man into a superhuman being, but rather a pre-eminence over the larger part of men. There is nothing supernatural in this possession, and Thomas makes us sure that this was the opinion of Aristotle himself:

His second example illustrates the same point by a pagan proverb believing in the deification of heroes. This is not to be understood, Aristotle says, in the sense that human nature is changed into divine nature but in the sense that the excellence of virtue exceeds the usual human mode. Obviously, then, there is in some men a kind of divine virtue, and he draws the conclusion that this virtue is the opposite of brutishness.<sup>26</sup>

In his commentary on the *Ethics*, Thomas conveys an impression of awkwardness toward the *virtus heroica*. It is evident that Aristotle nowhere affirms explicitly that we do not have to believe that through heroic virtue man is transformed into a god; nonetheless, this assumption is obvious to such an intelligent reader of the *Nicomachean Ethics* as Thomas was. The reason of this attitude is probably that Thomas realized that it is not possible to integrate heroic virtue into the Aristotelian theory of virtue. The object of Aristotelian moral science is the human, earthly good, not the divine good, unless we maintain that, according to Aristotle, human good has a remote and weak similarity with divine realities and that it can somehow be called ‘divine’.

But if Aristotelian ‘orthodoxy’ held Thomas from developing a theory of heroic virtue in the context of an Aristotelian commentary, he recognized the importance of such a virtue in theology. That is why we find in the *Summa theologiae* a non-Aristotelian theory of *virtus heroica*. In fact, in the *Summa theologiae*, heroic virtue can signify primarily the human virtues when they are gifts of the Holy Ghost, and secondly the perfect quality of virtues in the person of Jesus Christ.

### *Heroic virtue as gift of the Holy Ghost*

Thomas states explicitly that heroic virtue in man can be a gift of the Holy Ghost. We can say that such gifts are in some way virtues, since,

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.: “Secundo manifestat idem [sc. quod sit in hominibus quaedam virtus heroica vel divina] per commune dictum Gentilium, qui dicebant quosdam homines deificari; quod Aristoteles non dicit esse credendum, quantum ad hoc quod homo vertatur in naturam divinam, sed propter excellentiam virtutis supra communem modum hominum; ex quo patet esse in hominibus aliquibus quandam virtutem divinam, et concludit hanc virtutem esse bestialitati oppositam” (translation *ibid.*; my italics).

as virtues do, they make somebody's action good; but given that they are inspired by God, they are something higher than common intellectual and moral virtues.<sup>27</sup> Hence Thomas suggests that they can be identified with the heroic virtue mentioned in book 7 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

These Gifts are sometimes called virtues, in the common meaning of the word *virtue*. However, there is something in them that transcends the common meaning of virtue, in that they are divine virtues and perfect man in so far as he is moved by God. Hence Aristotle also posits what he calls *heroic* or *divine* virtue, by reason of which some are called divine men.<sup>28</sup>

Let us analyze some examples. Talking about the difference between *crudelitas* (cruelty—excessive harshness in the judgment of crimes) and *saevitas sive feritas* (the perversion of someone who rejoices in practicing torture), Thomas states that cruelty is a human vice, and its opposite a human virtue: *clementia* (clemency); on the contrary, *feritas* (ferocity) is not a human vice, it is rather a form of brutishness. Since *feritas* is not a human vice, its opposite is not a human but rather a superhuman virtue, that is, a heroic virtue belonging to the gifts of the Holy Ghost—in this case, the gift of piety:

Clemency is a human virtue, and so its direct opposite is cruelty, which is a human vice. Savagery and ferocity, however, are inhuman, and its direct opposite does not, like clemency, lie in the field of human virtue, but beyond, namely in that superhuman virtue, which Aristotle calls heroic or divine and which seems according to us to belong to the gifts of the Holy Ghost. And so we may agree that savagery is directly opposed to the gift of piety.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> For the different conceptualization of virtues and gifts in the thirteenth century, see Odon Lottin, *Psychologie et morale aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles* (Gembloux–Louvain, 1942–1960) 6: 127.

<sup>28</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* I.II.68.1, *Opera omnia* 6: 447: “Ad primum ergo dicendum quod huiusmodi dona nominantur quandoque virtutes, secundum communem rationem virtutis. Habent tamen aliquid supereminens rationi communi virtutis, in quantum sunt quaedam divinae virtutes, perficientes hominem in quantum est a Deo motus. Unde et Philosophus, in VII *Ethic.*, supra virtutem communem ponit quandam virtutem *heroicam* vel *divinam*, secundum quam dicuntur aliqui *divini viri*.” The translation is taken from Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (London, 1920–1932) 24: 11.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* II.II.159.2, *Opera omnia* 10: 287: “Ad primum ergo dicendum quod clementia est virtus humana: unde directe sibi opponitur crudelitas, quae est malitia humana. Sed saevitia vel feritas continetur sub bestialitate. Unde non directe opponitur clementiae, sed superexcellentiore virtuti, quam Philosophus vocat *heroicam* vel *divinam*, quae

In his commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, Thomas gives another interesting example. If a brave man is afraid of something about which it is appropriate to have fear, he is not vicious: he just abstains from being fearless or rash, that is to say, he abstains from the opposite of courage. If a brave man is afraid of nothing because he is supported and encouraged by God, then his fearlessness is still not a vice. In such a case, the gifts of the Holy Ghost make his braveness superior to human braveness and provide him with a super-human and heroic virtue:

The Philosopher distinguishes between two kinds of virtue: ordinary virtue, which perfects the human being in a human way, and a special virtue which he calls heroic and which perfects one beyond human measure. For if a brave person is afraid when fear is appropriate, he is virtuous; if he were not afraid, he would suffer from vice. If, however, he were afraid of nothing due to his trust in God's help, his virtue would be beyond human measure, and these virtues are called divine... The ensuing merits are either acts of the gifts or acts of the virtues in as far as they are perfected by the gifts.<sup>30</sup>

The following passage from Thomas's commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians confirms this theory in connection with the intellectual virtues:

For in virtue, one must consider the disposition (*habitus*) and the act. The disposition of virtue perfects one to acting well. And if it perfects one to do well in a human way, it is called a virtue. If, however, it perfects one to do well beyond human measure, it is called a gift. Hence, the Philosopher places certain heroic virtues above the ordinary virtues. For example, knowing God's invisible truth as a mystery is in accordance with human measure, and this sort of knowledge pertains to the virtue of faith, but knowing it clearly and beyond human measure pertains to the gift of understanding.<sup>31</sup>

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secundum nos videtur pertinere ad dona Spiritus Sancti. Unde potest dici quod saevitia directe opponitur dono pietatis" (translation 44: 81, modified by me).

<sup>30</sup> Id., *Super Evangelium S. Matthaei lectura* 5.2, ed. Raphael Cai (Turin–Rome, 1951), 66: "Philosophus distinguit duplex genus virtutis: unum communis, quae perficit hominem humano modo; aliud specialis, quam vocat heroicam, quae perficit supra humanum modum. Quando enim fortis timet ubi est timendum, istud est virtus; sed si non timeret, esset vitium. Si autem in nullo timeret confisus dei auxilio, ista virtus esset supra humanum modum: et istae virtutes vocantur divinae... Ergo ista merita vel sunt actus donorum, vel actus virtutum secundum quod perficiuntur a donis". The translation is mine.

<sup>31</sup> Id., *Super Epistolam S. Pauli ad Galatas lectura* 5.6, in *Super Epistolas S. Pauli lectura*, ed. Raphael Cai (Turin–Rome, 1953) 1: 636: "In virtute enim est considerare habitum et actum. Habitus autem virtutis perficit ad bene agendum. Et si quidem perficit ad

As we can infer from this passage, knowing God through a ‘poor reflection and as in a mirror’ is knowing God through faith, but knowing God ‘face to face’ is knowing God in a super-human way, which is possible through heroic virtue and the gift of understanding.

*Heroic virtue as perfect virtue in the person of Jesus Christ*

*Virtus heroica* can also refer, in Aquinas’s view, to the perfection of virtue in the person of Jesus Christ. As Christ possessed perfect grace, Aquinas explains, so he possessed the infused moral virtues—which have grace as their efficient cause—in a perfect and superhuman degree. “Heroic” or “divine” virtue as present in Christ is not different from ordinary (acquired) virtue as to its essence, but only as to its perfection; it can be equated (as Albert did in his commentaries) to the *virtus purgati animi* as conceived by Plotinus:

Grace looks after the essence of the soul and virtue looks after its faculties ... It follows that, just as the faculties spring from the essence of the soul, the virtues should be the flowering of grace. Now, a principle will produce its effects to the extent of its own perfection. Since, then, grace was at its very best in Christ, it gave rise to virtues which perfected each of the faculties of the soul and all its activities. In this way Christ had all the virtues... Between this heroic or divine attitude and ordinary virtue there is only a difference of degree: a man who has it is sensitive to what is good in a higher way than the ordinary run of men. Therefore, the text in question proves, not that Christ lacked the virtues, but that he had them in a most perfect and extraordinary degree. Plotinus, too, held for this kind of sublime level of virtue, to be found, according to him, in the *refined soul*.<sup>32</sup>

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bene operandum humano modo, dicitur virtus. Si vero perficiat ad bene operandum supra modum humanum, dicitur donum. Unde Philosophus supra communes virtutes ponit virtutes quasdam heroicis, puta cognoscere invisibilia dei sub aenigmate est per modum humanum; et haec cognitio pertinet ad virtutem fidei; sed cognoscere ea perspicue et supra humanum modum, pertinet ad donum intellectus”. The translation is mine.

<sup>32</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* III.7.2, *Opera omnia* 11: 108: “Respondeo dicendum quod... sicut gratia respicit essentiam animae, ita virtus respicit eius potentiam. Unde oportet quod, sicut potentiae animae derivantur ab eius essentia, ita virtutes sunt quaedam derivationes gratiae. Quanto autem aliquod principium est perfectius, tanto magis imprimit suos effectus. Unde, cum gratia Christi fuerit perfectissima, consequens est quod ex ipsa processerint virtutes ad perficiendum singulas potentias animae, quantum ad omnes animae actus. Et ita Christus habuit omnes virtutes... Ad secundum dicendum quod habitus ille heroicus vel divinus non differt a virtute communiter dicta nisi secundum perfectiorem modum, inquantum scilicet aliquis est dispositus ad bonum

We could affirm the same thing about Christ's knowledge and his intellectual virtues:

There are two kinds of knowledge into the soul of Christ, and each is supremely perfect in its own way. One, that by which he sees the essence of God and other things through it, is beyond normal functioning of human nature (*excedens modum naturae humanae*). This was entirely perfect.<sup>33</sup>

The expression *excedens modum naturae humanae* makes us sure that Thomas assigns to the intellectual virtues in Jesus Christ the character of the *virtus heroica*.

### 3. *The commentaries of the Masters of Arts*

If Thomas attempted to integrate heroic virtue into Christian theology, the Masters of Arts active in the late thirteenth century displayed the opposite tendency. They tried to valorize heroic virtue in the context of Aristotelian philosophy without granting it any theological importance.

Among the texts that historians of medieval philosophy during the last fifty years have associated, in a rather inappropriate terminology, with 'Latin Averroism' or 'radical Aristotelianism', there stands out a group of commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics* in the form of *quaestiones* which are in all probability the result of teaching in the Parisian Arts Faculty.<sup>34</sup> These include the commentaries of Radulphus Brito<sup>35</sup> and Giles of Orléans (MS Paris, BnF lat. 16089, ff. 195<sup>ra</sup>–237<sup>vb</sup>);

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quodam altiori modo quam communiter omnibus competat. Unde per hoc non ostenditur quod Christus non habuit virtutes: sed quod habuit eas perfectissime, ultra comunem modum. Sicut etiam Plotinus posuit quendam sublimem modum virtutum, quas esse dixit purgati animi" (translation 49: 11, modified by me).

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. III.11.5, p. 163: "Ad primum ergo dicendum quod in anima Christi fuit duplex cognitio: et utraque suo modo perfectissima. Una quidem excedens modum naturae humanae: qua scilicet vidit Dei essentiam et alia in ipsa. Et haec fuit perfectissima simpliciter" (translation 49: 133).

<sup>34</sup> See Martin Grabmann, *Der lateinische Averroismus des 13. Jahrhunderts und seine Stellung zur christlichen Weltanschauung: Mitteilungen aus ungedruckten Ethikkommentaren* (Munich, 1931), discussing the commentaries of Radulphus Brito, Giles of Orléans, and those of Erfurt and Erlangen. See also René-Antoine Gauthier, "Trois commentaires", discussing the commentaries of Brito, Giles, and James of Douai (?); id. in Aristotle, *L'Éthique à Nicomaque* 1.1: 132–134. I am currently preparing critical editions of the commentary of James of Douai (?) and the Erlangen commentary.

<sup>35</sup> Surviving in MSS Vatican City, BAV Vat. lat. 832; Vat. lat. 2172, ff. 1<sup>ra</sup>–53<sup>rb</sup>; Vat. lat. 2173, ff. 1<sup>ra</sup>–75<sup>ra</sup>; and Paris, BnF lat. 15106, ff. 1<sup>ra</sup>–75<sup>ra</sup>. On Brito, see Jean-Luc Deuffic, "Un logicien renommé, proviseur de la Sorbonne au XIV<sup>e</sup> s.: Raoul le Breton

the commentary attributed to James of Douai (MS BnF lat. 14698, ff. 130<sup>ra</sup>–164<sup>vb</sup>); the commentary, on books 1 and 2 only, of Peter of Auvergne;<sup>36</sup> and the anonymous commentaries of Erlangen, UB 213, ff. 47<sup>ra</sup>–80<sup>vb</sup>; Erfurt, SB Amplon. F. 13, ff. 84<sup>ra</sup>–117<sup>va</sup>; and Paris, BnF lat. 16110, ff. 236<sup>ra</sup>–281<sup>vb</sup>.<sup>37</sup> According to Gauthier, all of these commentaries date from the last years of the thirteenth century to the first years of the fourteenth, with the exception of the commentary attributed to James of Douai, which seems to have been written just before the Parisian condemnation of 1277.<sup>38</sup> In general, the texts closely resemble each other in form as well as contents; moreover, they all strongly depend on the *Summa theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas (especially the *Prima secundae* and *Secunda secundae*).<sup>39</sup> Four of them dwell on the topic of heroic virtue.<sup>40</sup> The discussion in the anonymous commentary from Paris is disappointingly short and I will ignore it in the remainder of this article.<sup>41</sup> I shall focus instead on three other commentaries: by Radulphus Brito, Giles of Orléans, and the anonymous of Erlangen.

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de Ploudiry: Notes bio-bibliographiques”, *PECIA. ressources en médiévistique* 1 (2002), 45–154 (providing a biography, a complete bibliography, and a list of edited and unedited works), and Costa, “Il commento all’*Etica* Nicomachea di Radulfo Brito” (complete critical edition).

<sup>36</sup> Edited by Anthony J. Celano, “Peter of Auvergne’s Questions on Books I and II of the *Ethica* Nicomachea: A Study and Critical Edition”, *Mediaeval Studies* 48 (1986), 1–110; see also René-Antoine Gauthier, “Les *Questiones supra librum Ethicorum* de Pierre d’Auvergne”, *Revue du moyen âge latin* 20 (1964), 233–260.

<sup>37</sup> This commentary, still almost completely unknown, consists of 325 *questiones* on the *Ethics*, including, at ff. 276<sup>vb</sup>–277<sup>vb</sup>, eight of Peter of Auvergne’s *questiones*, see Iacopo Costa, “Il problema dell’omonimia del bene in alcuni commenti scolastici all’*Etica* Nicomachea”, *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 16 (2006), 194–196.

<sup>38</sup> See Gauthier, “Trois commentaires”, 213–229; id., review of *Psychologie et morale*, 75–85; see also Odon Lottin, “A propos de la date de certains commentaires sur l’*Ethique*”, *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 17 (1950), 127–133; Roland Hissette, “La date de quelques commentaires à l’*Ethique*”, *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale* 18 (1976), 79–83.

<sup>39</sup> This dependence is not always doctrinal in character. The authors found in the *Summa* a model for their argumentations, but their theories are often opposed to those of Thomas.

<sup>40</sup> Peter of Auvergne and the anonymous of Erfurt do not comment on book 7, while the commentary of James of Douai (?) is mutilated and ends *ex abrupto* at the beginning of question 8 on book 5.

<sup>41</sup> *Questiones in Ethicam* (Paris), ff. 255<sup>vb</sup>–266<sup>ra</sup>: “Queritur vtrum virtus heroica sit possibilis homini, et videtur quod non. ⟨1⟩ Quia quod debetur superiori non debetur inferiori, sed magis econuerso, cum superius contineat inferius et ea que sunt eius; cum igitur virtus heroica debeatur (*de corr.* dei causatur virtus) deo, cum sit virtus diuina, non erit homini possibilis. ⟨2⟩ Et iterum, Commentator dicit quod virtus heroica excedit communem modum hominum, ergo ⟨non est⟩ virtus hominis, cum nulla virtus



As far as the nature of the *virtus heroica* is concerned, the theory of the three Masters of Arts seems to depend neither on Albert nor on Thomas. According to their interpretation of Aristotle's text, heroic virtue is the *habitus* or disposition of the will through which the human intellect is drawn to the knowledge of God and of the first causes. This knowledge is described as a form of union and assimilation between the human intellect and God, and it realizes the highest perfection of the human soul. Like in Thomas, this theory has some theological implications, since it concerns a kind of relation between man and God, but at the same time, these theological implications involve no revealed element, as they do in Thomas's *Summa*. It is rather a merely rational theory, developed in the context of Aristotelian ethics.

According to Radulphus Brito and the anonymous of Erlangen, human nature shares both in the nature of beasts and in the nature of angels (that is, of separated substances). As there is a disposition through which man can fall below human nature and become similar to a beast, there must be a disposition through which man is elevated above human nature and participates in divine realities.<sup>42</sup> On this point

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excedat (*MS*: exedat) suum subiectum. Oppositum dicitur in littera. Et dicendum quod virtus heroica siue diuina est possibilis homini. Et ratio huius est quia homo, cum habeat intellectum, communicat cum substantiis separatis, per potentias sensitivas cum brutis; et sic homo prosequens sensibilia sensitivo appetitui ad modum bestie dicitur bestia; sic homo habens intellectum eleuatum supra (*de corr.* si<sup>c</sup>) modum commune hominum, dicitur vir diuinus habens virtutem heroicam, non quia natura humana [et] transmutetur in diuina, sed quia aliquid diuinum apparet in homine. Per hoc solute sunt rationes: cum dicitur in secunda quod virtus heroica excedit hominem, non est intelligendum quod excedat hominem simpliciter, sed quod habens eam sit supra communem modum hominum, vt exponit Commentator et innuit Philosophus".

<sup>42</sup> Radulphus Brito, *Questiones in Ethicam* 7 q. 155: "Quia sicut dicit Commentator II Phisicorum, homo est medius inter intelligentias et bruta; modo contingit quod per deprauationem appetitus aliquis homo fit bestialis et bruto similis; ergo per eleuationem et excellentiam intellectus poterit habere uirtutem similem intelligentiis; modo talis uirtus est uirtus heroyca; ideo possibile est uirtutem heroycam inesse homini"; *Questiones in Ethicam* (Erlangen) 7 q. 124, f. 72<sup>rb-va</sup>: "Cuius racio est, sicut dicit Commentator II Phisicorum, quod homo medius est inter substancias separatas et bruta, et hoc per animam suam, vnde conuenit cum utroque sicut medium cum extremis: cum intelligentiis secundum intellectum, cum brutis secundum appetitum; et ideo sicut homo deprauatur aliquando ut bruto secundum appetitum assimiletur inpetuose prosequendo, ut dicitur de barbaris, quorum aliqui deprauati (sunt) secundum gustum ut bibant sanguinem uel edant carnes humanas et aliqui secundum tactum ut delectentur in coitu masculorum, ita eciam contingit aliquando secundum intellectum uel uoluntatem eleuari ut assimiletur nature intelligentiarum, et hoc facit uirtutem heroycam; ergo ipsa homini est possibilis". It is interesting to remark that this statement is ascribed, by the authors of these two texts, to the commentary on the *Physics* by Averroes, while the right ref-

both commentators draw on Albert's and Thomas's commentaries on the *Ethics*.

The most original aspect of the theory of the Masters of Arts probably resides in the statement that *virtus heroica* is a disposition of the human will. Since it inclines us to action (that is, contemplation), it is a form of appetite; and since it engages us toward an intellectual object, it has to be located in the intellectual desire, so that it must be a disposition of the will.<sup>43</sup> More precisely, heroic virtue can be described as a

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erence seems rather to be Nemesius of Emesa, *De natura hominis* 1, ed. Gerard Verbeke and José R. Moncho (Leiden, 1975), 6: "Ideoque velut medius est intellectualis et sensibilis substantiae, copulatus secundum corpus quidem et corporales virtutes irrationalibus animalibus et inanimatis, secundum rationale vero incorporeis substantiis"; see also *ibid.*, p. 9: "Quasi igitur medius terminus irrationalis et rationalis naturae homo constitutus"; and *ibid.*, p. 10; cf. Augustine, *De civitate dei* 12.22, ed. Bernardus Dombart and Alphonsus Kalb, CCSL 48: 380: "Hominem uero, cuius naturam quodam modo mediam inter angelos bestiasque condebat..."; Gregory the Great, *Dialogi* 4.3.2, ed. Adalbert de Vogüé and Paul Antin (Paris, 1978–1980) 3: 24: "Homo itaque, sicut in medio creatus est, ut esset inferior angelo, superior iumento, ita aliquid habet commune cum summo, aliquid commune cum infimo, immortalitatem scilicet spiritus cum angelo, mortalitatem uero carnis cum iumento". I owe these references to Massimiliano Lenzi, "Forma e sostanza: Le origini del dibattito sulla natura dell'anima nel XIII secolo" (Ph.D. diss. Università degli Studi di Salerno, 2006). The source that the thirteenth-century texts are all reproducing was probably Averroes, *De physico auditu* 2.26, in *Aristotelis opera cum Averrois commentariis* (Venice, 1562–1574; repr. Frankfurt am Main, 1962) 4: 59: "oportet naturalem peruenire in consyderatione de formis ad vltimam formam, propter quam fuit materia. v. g. ad formam hominis... scientia igitur naturalis consyderat de esse formarum, quousque perueniat ad vltimam formarum materialium, et primam abstractarum, aut ad formas formarum, que sunt mediae in esse inter illas: sicut existimatur de forma hominis vltima". Averroes here expresses the idea that the human soul is on the limit between material and immaterial realities.

<sup>43</sup> Radulphus Brito, *Questiones in Ethicam* 7 q. 155: "Sed notandum est quod ista uirtus heroyca est in appetitu: quia illa uirtus que est principium inclinandi ad operandum est in appetitu; modo uirtus heroyca est huiusmodi; ideo etc. Etiam habet esse in appetitu intellectiuo: quia in appetitu illius potentie habet esse ista uirtus, in cuius obiectum habet inclinare; modo ista uirtus habet inclinare in obiectum intellectus, quia in cognitionem diuinam; ergo habet esse in appetitu intellectiuo, cuiusmodi est uoluntas, et non in appetitu sensitiuo"; *Questiones in Ethicam* (Erlangen) 7 q. 124, f. 72<sup>rb-va</sup>: "Et ex hoc patet quod est in parte appetitiua (sc. virtus heroica): ipsa est enim habitus inclinans nos ad illam summam perfectionem et actum hunc nature secundum intellectum; potentia autem appetitiua solet inclinare, inclinatur autem ad modum (modum *coni.*: medium *ms.*) nature, ut dicit Philosophus (!), et est in appetitu intellectiuo, scilicet (in) uoluntate, cuius ratio est quia in illius (in illius *coni.*: nullius *MS*) potentie appetitu est uirtus heroyca in cuius obiectum ordinat alia ut in finem; modo (nulla potentia) ordinat nos in naturam superiorem et cognitionem dei et causarum altissimarum, que non cognoscit, nisi intellectus solus; ergo uirtus heroyca est in appetitu ipsius intellectus, scilicet in uoluntate"; Giles of Orléans, *Questiones in Ethicam* 7 q. 131, f. 222<sup>rb</sup>: "Ex dictis patet in quo sit uirtus eroyca sicut in subiecto, utrum scilicet in intellectu aut in

yearning and effort of the will which unifies the highest aspirations of the intellectual virtues, pushing them to the knowledge of the most sublime and divine realities, and consequently producing the most intense happiness.<sup>44</sup> The remaining parts of the Arts Masters' expositions of

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appetitu, quia est in appetitu: est enim habitus quo aliquis inclinatur ex electione in talem ordinem; talis autem habitus est appetitus, et non intellectus. Item, virtus heroyca est habitus appetitus intellectiui et non sensitiui: quia est in illo appetitu sicut in subiecto in cuius finem inclinatur; inclinatur autem in finem appetitus intellectiui, sicut dictum est, quia inclinatur omnes operationes inferiores in supremam respectu obiecti nobilissimi; hoc autem esse non potest obiectum appetitus sensitiui cum sit bonum vniuersale et obiectum sensitiui est singulare”.

<sup>44</sup> Radulphus Brito, *Questiones in Ethicam* 7 q. 155: “Sicut dicit Themistius II De Anima, quibuscumque mortalium natura dedit intellectum, eisdem dedit ceteras potentias anime in ministerium intellectus; sed intellectus humanus aliquando intelligit ista inferiora, aliquando substantias superiores, et ultimo primam causam; et ideo omnes operationes uirium sensitiuarum et omnes alie operationes intellectus ad operationem qua homo intelligit substantias superiores habent ordinari; modo determinatio istius ordinis non est nobis omnibus nota per naturam, et ideo indigemus aliquo habitu inclinate nos ad hoc ut omnes nostre cognitiones ad cognitionem prime cause et substantiarum separatarum ordinentur; talis autem habitus est uirtus heroyca, quia de ista uirtute heroyca dicitur quod est diuina non quia sit dei, sed quia facit homines deo similes uel inclinatur ad cognitionem per quam homo fit deo similis”; *Questiones in Ethicam* (Erlangen) 7 q. 124, f. 72<sup>rb</sup>: “Sicut dicit Themistius super II De anima, quibuscumque mortalibus natura tradidit intellectum, hiis tradidit alias potentias in ministerium intellectus (intellectus *coni.*: intellectum *MS*); et ex hoc accipitur quod alie potencie hominis in intellectum et operationes earum in operationes intellectus ordinentur: hoc enim naturale est, ut secunda in primam ordinetur; sic sunt potencie sensitiue respectu intellectus; ergo in eum ille ordinantur. Ipse autem intellectus aliquando fertur in res nature inferiores, aliquando in superiores, et hoc uel in propinquo, uel in immediatos motores orbium, aliquando autem in primum motorem, et hoc est vltimum de potencia intellectus et suprema eius operatio; ergo etiam alie uirtutes hominis in hanc intellectus vltimam operationem ordinantur. Huius autem ordinis determinatio non est nobis nota, quia sic omnes homines suas operationes in illam operationem ordinarent, quod uidemus non fieri; et ideo ad hoc indigemus quodam habitu quo ordinemus omnes nostras operationes in illam summam et nobilissimam operationem intellectus; hunc autem habitum possumus dicere uirtutem heroycam auctoritate Philosophi, qui dicit quod ipsa est uirtus diuina, et quod per eam fiunt homines dii, et est super homines et est in paucis; hec autem omnia conueniunt predicto habitui, quia illa operatio maxime nos diuinos facit et vnit deo, et similes deo efficimur cum intelligendo, et est super hominem, quia communem vsum hominem (excedit), quia ad hoc ut ille habitus sit in homine requiritur mortificatio totalis multarum passionum et esse impassibile, ne passione impediatur ab alia speculatione; et ideo est uirtus heroyca”; Giles of Orléans, *Questiones in Ethicam* 7 q. 131, f. 222<sup>ra</sup>: “Intellectus aliquando fertur in intelligentia inferiora, aliquando in superiora uel in separata a materia, et de separata aliquando ad superiores intelligentias et ad deum, et aliquando in inferiores; omnes autem operationes intellectus feruntur et ordinantur in operationem intelligendi que est respectu obiecti nobilissimi, et ideo omnes operationes hominis ordinantur in operationem hominis potissimam naturaliter, quia inferiora in superiora ordinantur,

heroic virtue are a collage of implicit quotations from the commentaries by Albert and Thomas and therefore do not deserve further investigation here.

One could affirm that the Masters of Arts understood that heroic virtue cannot be properly described as an intellectual virtue. Intellectual virtues are faculties defined by the objects of intellectual knowledge which are five in number (simple concepts, principles, demonstrations, and the objects of practical wisdom and art). As a consequence, there cannot be more than five intellectual virtues. If heroic virtue were an intellectual virtue, it would be a virtue, or *habitus*, without a proper object, which is impossible. Neither can heroic virtue be a disposition of the irrational part of human soul, as moral virtues are, since the irrational part is the lower part of the soul, which cannot share in a superior, divine nature.

### *Conclusion*

Through the identification of heroic virtue with the Christian concept of continence, Albert the Great granted heroic virtue a deep anthropological meaning, but a deep misinterpretation of the Aristotelian text resulted from this identification. Thomas Aquinas, by contrast, demonstrates in his commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* a remarkable respect of the Aristotelian conception of *virtus heroica*. In the context of theological discussion in the *Summa theologiae*, however, he includes the *virtus heroica* in his Christological theories and in his theory of the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Implicitly rejecting Albert's and Thomas's accounts of heroic virtue, the Masters of Arts circumvented the difficulties raised by the theories of both Dominican masters. They neither made heroic virtue a duplicate of self-restraint (as Albert did), nor did they leave heroic virtue in the shadow (as Thomas did in his commentary on the *Ethics*) while using

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vnde inferiora illa nata sunt ordinari in ipsa superiora; perfectio autem ordinis huius non inest homini a natura, quia iam in nobis omnibus reperiretur, quod falsum est: non enim omnes homines in operationem intelligendi respectu primi suas operationes ordinant; et ideo cum perfectio istius ordinis non insit nobis a natura, indigemus habitu quo inclinamur et perficimur illa ordinatione; talem autem habitum dicimus virtutem eroycam: hoc enim intelligimus per virtutem eroycam, scilicet habitum quo homo ordinat omnes suas operationes in operationem hominis supremam que est respectu obiecti nobilissimi”.

the concept as an element of a revealed doctrine (as Thomas did in the *Summa theologiae*). Instead, they asserted through heroic virtue a purely philosophical ideal of human perfection conceived as intellectual desire and knowledge. Yet the explanation of the Masters of Arts remains alien to Aristotelian thought, since one cannot say that, according to Aristotle, heroic virtue is a disposition of the will which pushes man to the contemplation of eternal substances. At the same time, their conception of *virtus heroica* as a profane human perfection remains alien to Christian ideals.

*UTRUM FELIX INDIGEAT AMICIS:*  
THE RECEPTION OF THE ARISTOTELIAN THEORY  
OF FRIENDSHIP AT THE ARTS FACULTY IN PARIS

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The recent critical edition of the 219 doctrinal articles condemned at Paris in 1277 includes a new condemned article, *Quod caritas non est maius bonum quam perfecta amicitia*, that is, charity is not a greater good than perfect friendship.<sup>1</sup> However, the discovery of this article has negligible importance for the study of the condemnation's doctrinal framework because it was already known to scholarship through Raymond Lull's *Declaratio*,<sup>2</sup> written not very long after the condemnation, and because the article is present in only four of the more than thirty manuscripts in which the text is preserved, none of these four being significant to the establishment of the text.<sup>3</sup> This being so, textual criticism concerning the new article leads one to the conclusion that it has only minor philosophical significance. Indeed, it is reasonable to conclude that the

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<sup>1</sup> *La condamnation parisienne de 1277*, ed. David Piché (Paris, 1999), 134, 146–147 (articles 181 and 200).

<sup>2</sup> Raymond Lull, *Declaratio Raymundi per modum dialogi edita contra aliquorum philosophorum et eorum sequacium opiniones erroneas et damnatas a venerabili patre domino episcopo parisiensi*, ed. Michela Pereira and Thedor Pindl-Büchel, CCCM 79: 384. Written in Paris in 1298, the *Declaratio* consists of a fictitious dialogue between Socrates and Raymond, in which the former presents one by one the condemned articles at Paris in 1277 and the latter responds, justifying their condemnation by Etienne Tempier. See the introduction to the critical edition, but also the introduction by Cécile Bonmariage to the recent French translation of the *Declaratio: Lulle et la condamnation de 1277: La déclaration de Raymond écrite sous forme de dialogue*, trans. Cécile Bonmariage and Michel Lambert with Jean-Michel Counet (Louvain, 2006).

<sup>3</sup> In the *Declaratio* this article comes together with the article that condemns the statement that chastity is not superior to abstinence (no. 181), precisely as it does in three of the four manuscripts in which the text of the condemnation survives. On the place and significance within the manuscript tradition of the manuscripts in which this article is extant, see *La condamnation parisienne*, 24, 55.

article did not form part of the original condemnation of 1277 and that it was never actually condemned.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, the fact remains that Lull commented on the article, and the way in which he explains it can shed light both on the problems posed by the Aristotelian theory of friendship and the way it was received at the Arts Faculty of Paris. In the *Declaratio*, the Catalan author does not criticise the statement that perfect friendship is above charity, but the fact that the Aristotelian theory of friendship, based on the virtuous man's love of himself, does not take into account love for God and God's love. For Lull every form of love depends on God's love (i.e., charity), which is not only much broader than human friendship but also and most importantly the source of any kind of love. Moreover, according to Lull, friendship is more often achieved *propter sensitivum quam propter aliud*,<sup>5</sup> which implies that friendship has a more limited extent than charity. Thus the point is not about the superiority of human friendship to charity—a statement which we can hardly imagine professed in the Middle Ages and thus difficult to imagine condemned—but about the possibility of a perfect human friendship without any dependence on or reference to divine love, so that charity becomes superfluous to the attainment of a virtuous life. This superfluity accords with an idea expressed in another article of the condemnation, *Quod non sunt possibiles alie virtutes, nisi acquisite uel innate*, that is, there are no other virtues than those acquired or innate.<sup>6</sup> Although this article probably reflects a misunderstanding of Albert the Great's position on the limits of philosophy, we can, all the same, grasp the heart of the problem in the two articles. The idea that the commission of 1277 and Lull are trying to avoid is the possibility of an entirely human anthropology and morality, in which God is not the basis and, therefore, unnecessary. As the Aristotelian theory of friendship offers a model of the highest and most virtuous life attainable in this life, without any appeal to charity, it allows the philosophical life to become an alternative to the theological one.

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<sup>4</sup> As Roland Hissette has shown, the new article is likely to be a contamination in the manuscripts due to a corruption in the transcription of the word *castitas* that gave rise to the word *caritas*, implying then the insertion of the corresponding word *amicitia* instead of *abstinentia* at the end of the article, so that the sentence of the condemned article could make sense. See Roland Hissette, review of *La condamnation parisienne de 1277*, *Revue philosophique de Louvain* 100 (2002), 621.

<sup>5</sup> Lull, *Declaratio*, 384.

<sup>6</sup> *La condamnation parisienne*, 132–133 (article 177), with bibliography.

This idea is defended by Alain de Libera, who, though briefly, focuses on the importance of the use that Parisian Arts masters made of the Aristotelian theory of virtuous friendship.<sup>7</sup> According to Aristotle, virtuous friendship is grounded in what was referred to as “virtuous egoism”, that is, the self-love the virtuous man has towards the superior part of his soul, the intellect.<sup>8</sup> This theory, which is linked to the idea that humanity is defined mainly by its intellectual powers,<sup>9</sup> led the Parisian masters of the late thirteenth century to formulate the thesis that the virtuous man—the one who lives in accord with his intellect and reason—can achieve the highest possible degree of human life through philosophical speculation. Hence the philosopher is the one who can most properly be called human. But because even the philosopher is a social being, he needs communication with other virtuous men in order to impart to them his philosophical speculation. A community of philosophers sharing the activity of philosophical speculation is thus proposed as a model for the professional activity of the Parisian masters. For De Libera, the idea of “virtuous egoism”, which is the basis of perfect friendship, defines a philosophical way of life, which is an alternative to the monastic one.

The Aristotelian theory of friendship is outlined in books 8 and 9 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, forming a precise textual block. Analysis of the unedited commentaries made at the Paris Arts Faculty on these books

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<sup>7</sup> Alain de Libera, *Penser au moyen âge* (Paris, 1991), 238–239; id., *Raison et foi: Archéologie d'une crise d'Albert le Grand à Jean Paul II* (Paris, 2003), 325–326. Libera's thesis is followed in David Piché, “Commentaires sur quelques articles d'une nouvelle édition de l'acte de censure parisien de 1277”, *Recherches de théologie et philosophie médiévales* 65 (1998), 344.

<sup>8</sup> The expression “virtuous egoism” was first used by René-Antoine Gauthier; see *L'Éthique à Nicomaque*, ed. René-Antoine Gauthier and Jean-Yves Jolif (Louvain–Paris, 1970) 2: 745–751. The expression is now commonly accepted, despite the problematic character of the term “egoism” in ethical theory. For discussions of Aristotelian “egoism” in Anglo-American scholarship see e.g. Richard Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good* (Princeton, 1989), 9–11, 78–154. On the “virtuous egoism” in medieval ethics see Thomas M. Osborne, *Love of Self and Love of God in Thirteenth-Century Ethics* (Notre Dame, 2005).

<sup>9</sup> The source of this idea is Michael of Ephesus and Eustratius, not Averroes. See Luca Bianchi, “Felicità intellettuale, ascetismo e arabismo: Nota sul *De summo bono* di Boezio di Dacia”, in *Le felicità nel medioevo*, ed. Maria Bettetini and Francesco D. Papparella (Louvain–La-Neuve, 2005), 29–30. Bianchi thus abandons the idea of an Averroistic anthropology in medieval and Renaissance authors formerly proposed in his “Filosofi, uomini e bruti: Note per la storia di un'antropologia averroista”, *Rinascimento* 32 (1992), 185–201, repr. in id., *Studi sull'aristotelismo del Rinascimento* (Padua, 2003), 41–61.



can shed further light on the doctrinal context of the condemnation of 1277 as far as ethical issues are concerned, and also on the idea of a philosophical life. Given the impossibility of an exhaustive analysis of books 8 and 9,<sup>10</sup> I provide a study of the way in which the commentaries once called Averroist<sup>11</sup> deal with some particular hints in these two books of the *Ethics*.<sup>12</sup> I shall focus especially on problems raised by the establishment of a theory of human friendship without God's love as its grounds and on the reduction of the ambit of Aristotelian friendship carried on in these commentaries. This can be shown both in the study of how political friendship was conceived and in the analy-

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<sup>10</sup> For other aspects of the medieval reception of the Aristotelian theory of friendship see especially James McEvoy, "The Theory of Friendship in the Latin Middle Ages: Hermeneutics, Contextualization, and the Transmission and Reception of Ancient Texts and Ideas, from c. AD 350 to c. 1500", in *Friendship in Medieval Europe*, ed. Julian Haseldine (Stroud, 1999), 3–44; Bénédicte Sère, "De la vérité en amitié: Une phénoménologie médiévale du sentiment dans les commentaires de l'Éthique à Nicomaque (XIIIe–XVe siècle)", *Revue historique* 214 (2005), 793–820 ead., *Penser l'amitié au moyen âge: Etude historique des commentaires sur les livres VIII et IX de l'Éthique à Nicomaque (XIIIe–XVe siècle)* (Turnhout, 2007). None of these studies takes into consideration the commentaries by the Arts Faculty previous to Buridan. On the reception of the Aristotelian theory of friendship in Renaissance commentaries see Ullrich Langer, *Perfect Friendship: Studies in Literature and Moral Philosophy from Boccaccio to Corneille* (Genève, 1994).

<sup>11</sup> Even though René-Antoine Gauthier, "Trois commentaires averroïstes sur l'Éthique à Nicomaque", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 16 (1947–1948), 334–335, pointed out the mistake of applying the term 'Averroist' to these commentaries on the *Ethics*, scholars continued to use it. Suffice it to say that in these commentaries, the epithet *Commentator* refers not to Averroes but to the Byzantine commentators of the *Ethics* translated by Grosseteste, and that the sources of many ideas called Averroist are in fact Albert the Great, Aquinas, Eustratius, and Michael of Ephesus.

<sup>12</sup> The commentaries analysed here are: Giles of Orléans, *Questiones in Ethicam*, MS Paris, BnF lat. 16089, ff. 195<sup>ra</sup>–233<sup>va</sup>; *Questiones in Ethicam*, MS Erlangen, UB 213, ff. 47<sup>ra</sup>–80<sup>vb</sup>; *Questiones in Ethicam*, MS Erfurt, SB Amplon. F 13, ff. 85<sup>ra</sup>–118<sup>va</sup>; *Questiones super libros VIII–IX Ethicorum*, MS Vatican City, BAV Vat. lat. 2173, ff. 53<sup>ra</sup>–64<sup>va</sup>; *Questiones super libros VIII–IX Ethicorum*, MS Paris, BnF lat. 15106, ff. 58<sup>ra</sup>–66<sup>va</sup>. A remark is necessary concerning these last two commentaries. The commentary on the *Ethics* usually known as the Anonymus Vaticanus—hypothetically attributed to Radulphus Brito by Gauthier and Iacopo Costa—is extant in three versions. In the first version, of which Iacopo Costa is now preparing a critical edition, there is no commentary on books 8 and 9. Two different commentaries on these books are extant, however, in both later versions of the text, contained in MSS Vatican City, BAV Vat. lat. 2173 and Paris, BnF lat. 15106. I shall refer to the commentator of Paris, BnF lat. 15106, as the Anonymous of Paris, and to the commentator of Vatican City, BAV Vat. lat. 2173, as the Anonymus Vaticanus. For the dating of these commentaries, see, in addition to Gauthier's study, Roland Hissette, "La date de quelques commentaires à l'Éthique", *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale* 18 (1976), 79–83.

sis of the relationship between happiness and friendship. For the sake of comparison, I will also refer to other commentators active between the mid-thirteenth and mid-fourteenth centuries.

*Friendship without Charity*

Although the Aristotelian theory of friendship was never condemned officially, the fact remains that there is an absence of any reference to charity in the commentaries on the *Ethics* composed at the Paris Arts Faculty. This poses a methodological problem. These commentaries date from the last three decades of the thirteenth century and/or the first decade of the fourteenth century, when theological and philosophical teaching were separated. The separation had come about partly as a result of Albert the Great's influence but mainly as a consequence of the statute of 1272 forbidding the masters to deal with theological issues.<sup>13</sup> Although one of the possibilities left open by the statute was that whenever a master had to face a theological argument, he should simply pass over the question, we may enquire whether the omission of any reference to charity in these commentaries is voluntary or forced.<sup>14</sup> In the official text of the oath required of bachelors of the Arts Faculty, which dates from 1280, this possibility is abandoned. Nevertheless, the existence of censorship in the Paris Arts Faculty before and after 1277 suggested that a master had to be cautious when dealing with theological issues. This means that if we consider the omission of any reference to charity in the commentaries on the *Ethics* as voluntary, the theory of a virtuous friendship, unsupplied with charity as its grounds, can be seen as an affirmation of an alternative life to the religious one. In contrast, if we assume that the omission was forced, the question becomes more complex, since from this simple absence we cannot conclude that an author rejects a theological ground for human friendship, just as the omission of the happiness of the afterlife in a commentary on the *Ethics* does not justify the conclusion that its author admits only happiness in this life.

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<sup>13</sup> On the statute of 1272 and its historiographical interpretations see Luca Bianchi, *Censure et liberté intellectuelle à l'Université de Paris (XIIIe–XIVe siècles)* (Paris, 1999), 165–201, but also Olaf Pluta, "Persecution and the Art of Writing: The Parisian Statute of April 1, 1272, and Its Philosophical Consequences", in *Chemins de la pensée médiévale: Études offertes à Zénon Kaluza*, ed. Paul J.J.M. Bakker (Turnhout, 2002), 563–585.

<sup>14</sup> Bianchi, *Censure et liberté*, 199–200.

In book 4 of a commentary written outside Paris, John of Tytynsale raises three questions concerning friendship and flattery which are clearly taken from Thomas Aquinas's *Summa theologiae*, but with an important difference: in places where Aquinas quotes the Bible and refers to charity, John quotes the *Ethics* and remains silent with respect to charity. Where Aquinas continues his text by raising the question of whether flattery is a mortal sin, John ends his text without raising further questions.<sup>15</sup> Of course, the fact that he takes his arguments from a theological work does not imply that he accepts the positions of that work. The problem here is to discern whether his silence on charity can be seen as a result of a wider strategy to sustain the idea that human friendship does not need a divine source or whether the author only wants to remain within the limits of philosophical science.

Even if an author can be silent on charity while commenting on book 4, in book 8 the situation is quite different, since Aristotle deals here with the problem of friendship between man and God. According to Aristotle, friendship is possible whenever there is equality or a limited inequality between two persons, which may permit a proportional love through which they can be equalised. This is because friendship requires a form of equality, and, most importantly, an effective reciprocity. As a result, friendship between man and God is impossible due to the extreme distance which separates them (*EN* 8.9, 1158b33–1159a6).<sup>16</sup> While the Anonymous of Erlangen and the Anonymous of Paris do not raise the question of the possibility of friendship between man and God, the Anonymous of Erfurt and the Anonymus Vaticanus provide the solution that God has benevolence towards man.<sup>17</sup> In so doing, they follow Albert, except that Albert himself writes *benevolentia*

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<sup>15</sup> The questions are: *De amicitia que dicitur affabilitas, utrum sit uirtus specialis; utrum adulatio sit peccatum; utrum litigium sit uitium oppositum amicitie uel affabilitas uirtuti; utrum sit grauius peccatum adulatio uel litigium* (*Questiones super libros Ethicorum*, MS Cambridge, Gonville and Caius 611/341, ff. 178<sup>va</sup>–179<sup>ra</sup>). It is clear that the referent is not the Aristotelian text of the *Ethics*, except for the first two questions, but Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.114.1, 115.1, and 116.1–2, *Opera omnia iussu Leonis XIII edita* (Rome, 1882–) 9: 441–442, 444–445, 447–448.

<sup>16</sup> On this passage see also Gauthier's commentary in Aristotle, *L'Ethique à Nicomaque* 2: 690–692. On the way medieval theologians dealt with this question see Osborne, *Love of Self and Love of God*.

<sup>17</sup> Anonymous of Erfurt, *Questiones in Ethicam* 8 q. 12, ff. 111<sup>vb</sup>–112<sup>ra</sup> (*utrum excellentia status corrumpat amicitiam*); Anonymus Vaticanus, *Questiones VIII–IX Ethicorum* 8 q. 12, ff. 55<sup>va</sup>–56<sup>ra</sup> (*utrum sublimitas et excellentia status corrumpat amicitiam aliorum ad inuicem*).

*vel caritas*.<sup>18</sup> This solution contradicts Aristotle, who thinks that God cannot know anything else besides himself and thus cannot have any relationship with man. According to Aristotle, the main difference between friendship and benevolence is that while the former requires reciprocity, the latter does not (*EN* 8.5). This position allows Albert to respect the Aristotelian rejection of friendship between man and God; because benevolence is not the same as friendship, God's benevolence towards man represents a compromise between Aristotelianism and Christianity.

But if Albert and the Anonymus Vaticanus are quite concise in their answer, which is only a reply to an argument *contra*, the Anonymous of Erfurt goes further, since he admits a friendship between God and man *secundum mentalem conuictum et delectationem*, an apparent reference to the union achieved in philosophical speculation.<sup>19</sup> This means that even though the author follows Albert's compromise and initially states that there is only benevolence by God towards man, later he assumes the possibility of a friendship between them brought about by man, or more precisely by only those men engaged in philosophical speculation.

Another case is the commentary by Giles of Orléans, the only author who explicitly raises the question of whether there can be friendship between God and man. Even though his answer clearly states that there

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<sup>18</sup> Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 8.7 (727), ed. Wilhelm Kübel, *Opera omnia* (Münster, 1951–) 14: 621. In his second commentary, Albert simply states that “non est dignum hominem Deum appellare amicum, sed potius colendum ac honorandum dominum”, Albert the Great, *Ethica* 8.2.1, *Opera omnia*, ed. Stephanus C.A. Borgnet (Paris, 1890–1899) 7: 532.

<sup>19</sup> Anonymous of Erfurt, *Questiones in Ethicam* 8 q. 12, ff. 111<sup>vb</sup>–112<sup>ra</sup>: “secundum quod Philosophus loquitur hic de amicitia, Deus non habet ad homines amicitiam propter excellentiam status, sed habet bene beniuolentiam ad homines, quia ad talem amicitiam de qua hic loquitur Philosophus requiritur mutuus conuictus delectabilis et conuictus corporalis. Et propter hoc non est talis amicitia inter Deum et homines, sed tamen est amicitia bene inter Deum et homines secundum mentalem conuictum et delectationem, et talis melior est quam que est secundum conuictum mutuuum corporalem et secundum delectationem corporalem”. Compare this mental friendship between man and God to the author's definition of contemplative happiness, *ibid.* 10 q. 17, f. 116<sup>vb</sup>: “felicitas hominis consistit in speculatione intellectus. Item felicitas est delectabilissima... felicitas non consistit in speculatione cuiuscumque, sed tantum in speculatione cause prime in reditione ad causam suam primam et in unione ad eandem (*MS*: eendem). Cum ergo felicitas sit optima perfectio hominis, ipsa consistet in reditione ad causam primam et in unione ad eandem”. Similar definitions of happiness can be found in other commentaries on the *Ethics*, see Iacopo Costa, “La dottrina della felicità nel ‘Commento del Vaticano’ all’Etica Nicomachea”, in *Le felicità nel medioevo*, 341–343.

is friendship between God and man, we shall see that his intentions are quite different. Giles bases his answer on the case of friendship between two unequal persons, as conceived by Aristotle, that is, a relationship between benefactor and beneficiary. Declaring that between man and God there must be at least some proportion, Giles considers God as the benefactor from whom man has received everything, including his being, and man the beneficiary who honours God in every way. Moreover, since everything that is lovable is loved because of its goodness, everything is loved in relation to the goodness of the *Primum*, that is God. Thus, every love has God as its basis and end, so even the love of a man for another man is a love in relation to God.<sup>20</sup> In this way Giles seems to adapt Aristotle to the Christian principle of neighbourly love; yet we have to ask whether his solution respects the limits of philosophy and whether it reflects Giles's thought on friendship. Given the fact that he establishes God's love as the ground and the finality for all kinds of love, it appears that, at least according to one Parisian master, the Aristotelian theory of friendship is integrated within a theological conception of love.

As far as the limits of philosophy are concerned, it is clear that Giles does not resolve the question by means of theological arguments. As Bianchi has written, referring to Boethius of Dacia, the ban on Parisian masters' determining purely theological questions has less to do with the object and content of an issue than with the method used. In this case, the questions that cannot be examined are those to which only faith can give an answer.<sup>21</sup> Likewise, in the case of Giles of Orléans,

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<sup>20</sup> Giles of Orléans, *Questiones in Ethicam* 8 q. 19, ff. 227<sup>b</sup>–228<sup>a</sup> (*utrum hominis ad Deum sit amicitia*): "... beneficentis ad beneficiatum est amicitia, et econuerso, sicut dicit Aristoteles inferius. Homo autem est beneficiatus, Deus autem est beneficiens. Homo enim omnia a Deo recipit, ideo et cetera... Item ibi est beneuolentia non latens; scit enim homo, nisi sit totaliter preter rationem, quod omnia que habet recipit a Deo, et Deus uult sibi benefacere, si enim non uellet non benefaceret sibi... Sed omne quod amatur, amatur propter Deum et in ordinem ad ipsum, quia omne quod amatur, amatur propter (*MS*: scilicet) bonum. Bonitas autem in quocumque non reperitur nisi in ordine ad bonitatem primi, quod est Deus. Ipse ideo omne quod amatur, amatur in ordine ad Deum. Si igitur homo diligit hominem, diligit ipsum in ordine ad Deum. Ergo magis diligit Deum... hominis enim ad Deum est amor superexcessi ad superexcellens, et illa amicitia causatur ex communicatione in aliquo quod quidem non reperitur in Deo et in homine per unam rationem, sed in homine per habitudinem ad Deum. Communicant enim in bonitate que reperitur in homine per habitudinem ad Deum; in hoc enim communicant Deus et homo, quia homo a Deo recipit omnia bona sua et Deus omnia sibi tribuit".

<sup>21</sup> Bianchi, *Censure et liberté*, 175. Further research has to be carried out on the limits

it seems that his answer does not touch on any question belonging exclusively to faith. As he does not speak of charity, so he establishes a relationship between God and man in which God does not intervene in human affairs and in which man has only to make tribute to God, since man recognises God as his source.

In one passage Giles refers to God's love as benevolence, as Albert does. Now if we recall that benevolence can exist even between two people who do not know each other personally, and that it does not imply reciprocity, we can assume that Giles envisages a form of friendship between God and man which does not necessarily require them to communicate. The relationship between God and man is established more on a metaphysical level: God is the source of man and man recognises this. Charity is not necessarily present and, despite the fact that Giles affirms that there is friendship between God and man, there is no actual friendship.

This can be further evidenced if we take into account the first book of Giles's commentary. It is well known that Giles rejects God as a direct cause of human happiness, because of the immutability of the first cause.<sup>22</sup> It might seem, then, that Giles's statement that God has benevolence towards man contradicts his theory of happiness. Nevertheless, the definition of benevolence given by Aristotle establishes that benevolence does not involve any change<sup>23</sup> and, accordingly, God

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of philosophy, since scholarship has focused most of all on Siger and Boethius. As far as the commentaries on the *Ethics* are concerned, their authors usually respect those limits, but at times they can go further. In the question of book 9, whether someone might desire to cease to be, the commentators had to deal either with the problem of suicide or with issues of sacrifice for the political community, giving a solution without any appeal to another life. In this question, the Anonymous Vaticanus raises the sub-question as to whether someone might desire to cease to be due to the hope of eternal life. According to this author, if someone has hope in an eternal life after death and wants to avoid a mortal sin, this person can decide to cease to be in order to avoid the subsequent eternal punishment. In contrast, if someone decides to commit a mortal sin, for example to kill himself, in order to avoid the eternal punishment, the Anonymous Vaticanus concludes that this is impossible, because that person would desire to be outside God's order (*extra ordinem Dei*), which is out of the question, since a sinner cannot avoid God's punishment (cf. *Questiones VIII–IX Ethicorum* 9 q. 8 [*utrum aliquis appetat non esse*], f. 61<sup>rb–va</sup>). These statements seem to echo the criticisms made by Aquinas of some Parisian masters who allow themselves to speak of the fire of hell.

<sup>22</sup> Gauthier, "Trois commentaires", 269–278.

<sup>23</sup> In Robert Grosseteste's translation, available to Giles, we read: "Sic utique et amicos non possibile esse non benivolos factus, benivolencia nichil magis amant. Volunt enim solum bona quidem sunt benivoli. Cooperantur autem nichil utique neque turbantur pro ipsis. Propter quod transferens dicet quis utique ipsam ociosam esse amicitiam";

can still have an identical effect towards every man, with no mutability in the first cause.

We can thus conclude that, according to Giles, God has no influence on human friendship, since man and God remain on separate levels. It is true that Giles writes that *si igitur homo diligit hominem, diligit ipsum in ordinem ad Deum, ergo magis diligit Deum*, but this statement should not be understood as a kind of ethical imperative on neighbourly love, but rather as a reflection of the Neoplatonic idea of participation, as shown by the statement *omne quod amatur, amatur propter bonum. Bonitas autem in quocumque non reperitur nisi in ordine ad bonitatem primi, quod est Deus ipse*. Moreover, in book 9 Giles raises two questions about self-love stating “virtuous egoism” without any mention of God’s love.<sup>24</sup>

It is therefore quite possible that in the question on friendship between man and God, Giles is being cautious.<sup>25</sup> In any case, throughout his commentary Giles shows that he supports the typical intellectual elitism of the Paris Arts Faculty and the idea of the supremacy of the philosophical life in the social hierarchy. In the question as to whether every man should be a beneficiary—a question that we find only in his commentary and that evokes a question in the *Summa theologiae*<sup>26</sup>—Giles declares that not all men can benefit in the same way. The fact that he stresses here that philosophical speculation permits man to become similar to God and to the separated substances can be seen as an affirmation that such virtuous men are likely to receive more benefits.<sup>27</sup>

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Aristotle, *Ethica nicomachea* 9.5 (1267a7–12), ed. René-Antoine Gauthier (Leiden–Brussels, 1972–1974), 550–551 (*recensio recognita*). The italics are mine.

<sup>24</sup> Giles of Orléans, *Questiones in Ethicam* 9 q. 6, ff. 228<sup>vb</sup>–229<sup>ra</sup> (*utrum homo sibi ipsi amicus esse possit*); q. 10, f. 229<sup>fb</sup>–<sup>va</sup> (*utrum homo seipsum maxime debeat amare*).

<sup>25</sup> For instance, at *ibid.* 8 q. 2, whether friendship is necessary to human life (f. 225<sup>fb</sup>–<sup>va</sup>), Giles quotes Cicero, but while Cicero, *Laelius de amicitia* 47, ed. Robert Combès (Paris, 1983), 31, writes “Solem enim e mundo tollere uidentur qui amicitiam e uita tollunt, qua nichil a dis immortalibus melius habemus, nichil iocundius”, Giles, or the copyist, writes “a Deo hominibus concessa”. Apart from the presence of the reference to monotheism in the quotation, this is in clear contrast to his theory of happiness.

<sup>26</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.31.2, *Opera* 8: 246.

<sup>27</sup> Giles of Orléans, *Questiones in Ethicam* 9 q. 9, f. 229<sup>fb</sup> (*utrum omni homini sit benefaciendum*): “notandum quod licet omni homini sit benefaciendum secundum quod possibile est, non tamen omnibus equaliter, sed magis propinquis quam remotis. Amicitia enim que fit ad alios prouenit ex amicitia quam habet ad seipsum. Ideo et cetera. Item. Homo secundum intellectum maxime assimilatur primo principio et substantiis diuinis. Ideo sunt alique actiones que maxime competunt homini per naturam intellectus, in quibus natus est assimilari Deo et substantiis separatis. In actionibus autem substantiarum separatarum ita est quod plus influunt in propinqua sibi quam in remota. Ipsum enim Primum magis influit in intelligentias quam in animas, et magis in animas quam

Thus it is clearly a secondary question whether the absence of any reference to charity in these commentaries is voluntary or forced. Indeed, there is no reference to charity even in texts about friendship where the authors do not defend the supremacy of the philosophical life, such as the theological *quodlibet* discussed by Jacques de Thérines or in the questions collected by Prospero of Reggio Emilia.<sup>28</sup> The same can be said of Raymond Rigauld's *Quodlibeta*, where he does refer to charity but still follows Aristotle's teachings.<sup>29</sup> The heart of the problem is not the absence of reference to charity, whether voluntary or forced, but the affirmation of perfect friendship in which charity plays no role and God is present only as final cause.<sup>30</sup> Naturally, when theologians comment on the *Ethics* and specifically on the passage on friendship

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in corpora. Vnde corpora illa propter longe distare a Primo facta sunt generabilia et corruptibilia. Ideo et cetera". The idea that inferiors must honour the "doctores et eruditores" because of their science is already present in Albert the Great, *Ethica* 8.2.1, p. 532. It would be nonetheless a limited interpretation to see in these statements only a sort of economic demand that the entire society should support the philosopher so he can be free to undertake philosophical speculation (demands that are present in these commentaries, as one can see later on in this paper). To understand Giles's statement, we must perhaps bear in mind the theory of "virtuous egoism" and Siger's *Quaestiones morales*, in which Siger argues that in order to become more virtuous we have to sacrifice ourselves for the profit of the best virtuous men and, consequently, we must leave external goods to those virtuous men who can make good use of them; see Christoph Grellard, "Amour de soi, amour du prochain: Nicolas d'Autrécourt, Jean Buridan et l'idée d'une morale laïque (autour de l'article condamné n° 66)", in *Chemins de la pensée médiévale*, 222–223.

<sup>28</sup> Jacques de Thérines, *Quodlibet* 1 q. 21, in id., *Quodlibets I et II*, and Jean Lessage, *Quodlibet I*, ed. Paléon Glorieux (Paris, 1958), 183–192. The questions collected by Prospero, extant in MS Vatican City, BAV Vat. lat. 1086, are: *utrum fruicio principalis consistat in actu amicitie uel concupiscentie* (f. 120<sup>v</sup>); *utrum maior sit dilectio ad amicum quam ad inimicum* (f. 131<sup>r</sup>); *utrum amicitia sit nobilior quam iusticia* (f. 141<sup>r</sup>). On this MS see Auguste Pelzer, "Prosper de Reggio Emilia, des Ermites de Saint-Augustin, et le manuscrit latin 1086 de la Bibliothèque Vaticane", *Revue néo-scholastique de philosophie* 30 (1928), 316–351; repr. in id., *Études d'histoire littéraire sur la scolastique médiévale*, ed. Adrien Pattin and Emile Van de Vyver (Louvain–Paris, 1964), 468–507.

<sup>29</sup> Raymond Rigauld, *Quodlibeta* 1.16, MS Todi, BC 98, ff. 5<sup>rb</sup>, 38<sup>va</sup>: *utrum perfecta amicitia possit esse ad plures*; 4.13, f. 20<sup>ra</sup>: *utrum ueritas sit prehonoranda amico*.

<sup>30</sup> Although we do not know who these anonymous commentators are, we can see from the rest of their commentaries on books 8 and 9 that they argue for the supremacy of the philosophical life. For instance, in the famous question of book 9, whether the teaching of philosophy should be paid for, the Anonymus Vaticanus (whose viewpoint on happiness we do not know), *Quaestiones VIII–IX Ethicorum* 9 q. 1, f. 59<sup>ra</sup>, writes that "philosophia est maximum bonum datum homini in hac uita". On this question in the commentaries on the *Ethics* see Gaines Post, Kimon Giocardinis, and Richard Kay, "The Medieval Heritage of a Humanistic Ideal: Scientia donum Dei est, unde vendi non potest", *Traditio* 11 (1955), 211–224.



between man and God, they adopt different argumentative strategies: either they carefully stress that Aristotle deals here only with human friendship or they explicitly introduce a reference to charity.<sup>31</sup>

Therefore, the absence of any reference to charity should be seen not as a conclusive sign in itself of any philosophical position, but rather in relation to positions affirmed by the author in the rest of his commentary. This can be corroborated if we examine Albert's first commentary, in which he raises the question of whether the virtuous man feels repentance. There he praises the excellence of the contemplative state and the absence of repentance in it. Nonetheless, what is most important in this question is the answer he gives to the objection that if grace is more perfect than moral virtue, and if he who has grace has repentance, then he who has perfect moral virtue also has repentance. Albert replies to this objection by arguing that even if we admit that grace is more perfect than moral virtue (*virtus civilis*), the virtues that lead to happiness still determine a more perfect state than grace, since happiness is only for perfect men, while grace can be extended to any person, regardless

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<sup>31</sup> Thomas Aquinas and Henry of Friemar take the first position. While Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 8.7, *Opera* 47: 465, restricts the ambit of the Aristotelian theory of friendship, Friemar, *Sententia totius libri Ethicorum* 8, MS Basel, UB FI.14, f. 209<sup>ra</sup>, writes that to deal with this kind of friendship is not “secundum mentem Philosophi, qui manifeste docet quod etiam in humanis, ubi est communicatio politica que proprie ad amicitiam pertinet, de qua loquitur Philosophus, non saluatur amicitia si fiat tanta amicorum distantia quod soluatur proportio equalitatis que est talis amicicie fundamentum... Si autem sit aliqua communicatio spiritualium bonorum alia a politica inter hominem et Deum, secundum quam homo uere possit dici amicus Dei (sed *add. MS*), non est philosophi perscrutari”. In the second case we have Guido Terreni, *Questiones in libros Ethicorum* 5 q. 4, MS Bologna, BU 1625, f. 31<sup>va</sup>: “amicitia moralis non est uirtus generalis. Dico autem moralis, quia non loquor de caritate, que est amicitia propriissime dicta supernaturalis, fundata super speciali communicatione bonorum supernaturalium, qua homo diligit Deum, que est uirtus generalis”; Gerald of Odo, *Sententia et expositio cum questionibus... super libros Ethicorum* 8 (Venice, 1500), f. 160<sup>ra</sup>: “Sed contra quoniam Abraam homo existens amicus Dei appellatus est, ut dicit Iacobus in canonica sua capitulo secundo. Sed dicendum ad hoc quod hominem amicum Dei appellari potest esse ex causa duplici, vna quidem ex adaequatione amoris humani ad dignitatem Dei, alio modo non ex dignatione Dei, quia scilicet acceptat amorem hominis gratuito. Ex prima uero causa non est visum Philosopho, quod homo uere possit appellari amicus Dei. Ex secunda uero causa certum fuit apostolo hominem appellari amicum Dei”; Walter Burley, quoted in Sère, “De la verité en amitié”, 815; and Nicolaus de Orbellis, *Compendium Ethicæ* 8, MS Basel, UB A.X.50, f. 83<sup>vb</sup>: “Circa quod notandum quod licet inter Deum et homines non sit amicitia stricte sumpta, que in quadam equalitate consistit, de qua hic loquitur Aristoteles... est tamen amicitia caritatis”. For later commentaries see Lager, *Perfect Friendship*, 83, 101; for other aspects of the references to charity in commentaries on the *Ethics* see Sère, *Penser l'amitié*, 251–297.

of his degree of perfection.<sup>32</sup> Obviously, we do not find this position in the commentaries of the Arts Faculty,<sup>33</sup> but we can easily imagine what would have happened if Albert's idea of the superiority of contemplative happiness to grace had been received or openly supported by the Parisian masters. In the *Summa*, Aquinas raises the question of whether perfection in Christian life is achieved through charity.<sup>34</sup> He answers that perfection is completely achieved through charity, and through the other virtues only *secundum quid*. We can thus see the point of Raymond Lull's criticism: if charity does not play any role in the achievement of perfection in this life, then perfection in accord with human virtues becomes perfection not *secundum quid*, but *simpliciter*.

Even though the condemned article reported by Lull focuses on perfect friendship, it is clear that the target of the condemnation is individual perfection without charity, which is in any case in conformity with the Aristotelian theory of perfect friendship based on self-love.

### *Private Friendship*

Although the emphasis on self-perfection and "virtuous egoism" is already present in Aristotle, as they are the main features of virtuous friendship, the commentaries of Albert and Aquinas accentuate further the significance of virtuous friendship in the framework of books 8 and 9. Influenced by Aspasius's commentary, both classify friendships grounded in utility and pleasure as "accidental" friendships (*per accidens*).<sup>35</sup> This theory, unsurprisingly, is followed by the Parisian Arts masters, with a further step in the estrangement between virtuous friend-

<sup>32</sup> Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 9.4 (789), p. 668.

<sup>33</sup> If we recall that, as Aristotle often declares, activity is always superior to passivity, and that philosophical speculation is the most superior form of activity, and that, in contrast, benevolence only implies that man receives something from God, without necessarily performing any act, we can bring the Anonymous of Erfurt closer to Albert; for the Anonymous declares that friendship between man and God, besides benevolence from God, can be achieved "secundum mentalem convictum", that is, only by those who *actively* undertake philosophical speculation, as said above. Nevertheless, the Anonymous does not openly support Albert's thesis.

<sup>34</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.184.2, *Opera* 10: 451–452.

<sup>35</sup> On this question in Aspasius's commentary on the eight book see Enrico Berti, "Amicitia e focal meaning", in *Aspasius: The Earliest Extant Commentary on Aristotle's Ethics*, ed. Antonina Alberti and Robert W. Sharples (Berlin–New York, 1999), 176–190. This idea is first found in Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 8.2 (697), pp. 597–598; id., *Ethica* 8.1.3, p. 521; Thomas Aquinas, *Sententiae libri Ethicorum* 8.3, p. 450.

ship and advantage- and pleasure-friendships. According to Giles of Orléans and the Anonymous of Erfurt, friendship grounded in pleasure cannot be proper to man because pleasure is common to men and animals. Only the sort of friendship which is in accord with the intellect is proper to man.<sup>36</sup> Besides expressing the typical intellectualist anthropology of the Arts Faculty,<sup>37</sup> this thesis implies a devaluation of friendships grounded in utility and pleasure and consequently even of political friendship, which is also grounded in utility. In other words, every aspect of the Aristotelian theory of friendship not related to virtuous friendship, such as the political features of friendship, becomes secondary in the commentaries of the Arts Faculty. Indeed, a brief analysis of the *tabulae quaestionum* of these commentaries on books 8 and 9 reveals a loss of interest in the political aspects of friendship, which does not occur in the literal expositions of Albert and Aquinas. Although we find questions in the commentaries about the naturalness of the right political constitutions or about political law, or even about the different degrees of authority (paternal and political) and the obedience due to them in case of conflict, significant themes such as concord or political

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<sup>36</sup> Giles of Orléans, *Questiones in Ethicam* 8 q. 16, f. 227<sup>va</sup>: "... homini inter aliqua secundum quod homo, ut scientie et uirtutes, insunt ipsi secundum quod homo et secundum quod communicat cum brutis, ut sentire et delectari; et illa que insunt homini secundum quod communicat cum brutis dicuntur homini inesse per accidens. Ideo cum uirtus insit homini secundum se et non secundum quod communicat cum brutis, patet quod amicitia que est propter uirtutem est amor propter se. Amicitia autem propter delectationem erit amicitia per accidens, quia delectatio inest homini secundum aliud prout scilicet homo communicat cum brutis"; Anonymous of Erfurt, *Questiones in Ethicam* 8 q. 5, f. 110<sup>vb</sup>: "amicitia que est propter bonum honestum est amicitia per se hominis. Cuius ratio est, quia habitus sumit rationem ex actu, et actus ex obiecto. Ergo amicitia, cum sit habitus, sumit rationem suam ex obiecto suo. Sed obiectum amicitie propter honestum est bonum per se, quia uirtus. Ergo talis amicitia est amicitia per se. Quod autem uirtus sit per se bonum hominis, hoc determinatur quia aliqua sunt que conueniunt homini secundum naturam suam, alia sunt que conueniunt homini, non secundum naturam propriam, sed secundum naturam communem, ut illa que conueniunt ei secundum quod animal est. Illud autem est bonum per se hominis, quod conuenit ipsi secundum naturam suam propriam... sed delectatio non sic est bonum per se hominis, que non conuenit ei secundum naturam propriam, sed secundum naturam communem, puta secundum quam est animal. Et similiter utilitas non conuenit ei sic secundum naturam propriam, sed secundum naturam communem".

<sup>37</sup> On this see Theodor W. Köhler, *Grundlagen des philosophisch-anthropologischen Diskurses im dreizehnten Jahrhundert: Die Erkenntnisbemühung um den Menschen im zeitgenössischen Verständnis* (Leiden, 2000), 584–624. The author studies in great length the commentaries on the *Ethics* made at the Arts Faculty.

friendship have almost disappeared.<sup>38</sup> In fact, a question about concord can be found only in the Anonymous of Paris's commentary,<sup>39</sup> and even though the syntagm *amicitia politica* occurs in these commentaries, being conceived as the union of different wills generated *ex convictu* in opposition to the *amicitia naturalis* between parents and sons,<sup>40</sup> there is a complete absence of any theorising about political friendship.

This lack of interest in political matters can be traced to the fact that at the beginning of book 8, following Albert, the commentators declare that they analyse friendship in the *Ethics* from the point of view of ethical science, not from the perspective of politics, because friendship can be regarded as either a *habitus* towards other individuals, in which case it is studied by ethical science, or as a *habitus* towards the common good, in which case it is studied by political science.<sup>41</sup> However, the main cause for this lack of concern for political themes in books 8 and 9 can be seen in the way in which the *Ethics* was first received and interpreted by Albert. His idea of the subordination of politics to ethics, the latter being the architectonic practical science,<sup>42</sup> together with his constant depreciation of political activity as an impediment to speculation, encouraged other commentators on the *Ethics* to say little about political matters and to take no interest in the *Politics*. Instead the Parisian masters emphasize individual perfection and contemplative happiness, which they often place above the political happiness of the entire community.<sup>43</sup> But even before Albert, we can point to another cause for the

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<sup>38</sup> This does not mean that the reception of the *Ethics* did not influence the reception of the *Politics*. It did in regard to some concepts, such as law and timocracy, present in the *Ethics*; see Roberto Lambertini, "Politische Fragen und politische Terminologie in mittelalterlichen Kommentaren zur *Ethica nicomachea*", in *Politische Reflexion in der Welt des späten Mittelalters/Political Thought in the Age of Scholasticism*, ed. Martin Kaufhold (Leiden, 2004), 109–127; but it is clear that in books 8 and 9 the political point of view is not treated by the commentators to the extent that it is by Aristotle.

<sup>39</sup> Anonymous of Paris, *Questiones Ethicorum VIII–IX* 9 q. 2, f. 64<sup>rb-va</sup> (*utrum concordia sit pars amicitie uel pertineat ad amicitiam*).

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. 8 q. 11, f. 61<sup>rb-va</sup>; Giles of Orléans, *Questiones in Ethicam* 8 q. 8, f. 226<sup>ra</sup>; Anonymous of Erfurt, *Questiones in Ethicam* 8 q. 29, f. 113<sup>ra</sup>; Anonymous of Erlangen, *Questiones in Ethicam* 8 q. 1, f. 75<sup>rb-va</sup>. The source of this distinction is Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 8.12 (753), p. 639, who took it from Aspasius's commentary.

<sup>41</sup> Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 8.1 (691), pp. 591–592. The question *utrum determinare de amicitia pertineat ad ethicum* can be found in Anonymous of Erlangen, *Questiones in Ethicam* 8 q. 1, f. 75<sup>rb-va</sup>; Anonymous of Erfurt, *Questiones in Ethicam* 8 q. 1, f. 110<sup>rb-va</sup>; Anonymus Vaticanus, *Questiones VIII–IX Ethicorum* 8 q. 1, f. 53<sup>ra-b</sup>.

<sup>42</sup> Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 1.2 (11), pp. 8–9.

<sup>43</sup> On the contempt of the masters for other social classes and on the idea that the good of the philosopher is above the entire society see Marco Toste, "Nobiles, optimi

focus on the individual: the fact that in the first period of the reception of the *Ethics*, the knowledge of the text remained restricted to the first books of the work, in which only individual perfection is discussed, and not the social relations the virtuous man must have.

The positions taken by commentators tend to increase the significance of the individual and make political matters irrelevant, even in commentaries from outside the Arts Faculty. The growing importance of the individual is clear in the theory, unanimously defended by the commentators, that political happiness is attained through prudence and not through justice, the virtue which relates to other persons. Since political happiness is attained through the individual virtue of prudence and consequently the aim of politics remains individual, the Anonymus Vaticanus can write that although political happiness presupposes friends, the happy man does not need them.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, as evidenced by disputes about whether friendship or justice is a general virtue, friendship is always envisaged, both by commentators on the *Ethics* and by theologians in *quodlibeta*, as a private relationship and as a virtue towards a small number of persons.<sup>45</sup> This is clear, for instance, in

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virī, philosophi: The Role of the Philosopher in the Political Community at the Faculty of Arts in Paris in Late Thirteenth Century”, in *Itinéraires de la raison: Etudes de philosophie médiévale offertes à Maria Cândida Pacheco*, ed. José Francisco Meirinhos (Louvain-La-Neuve, 2005), 273–274, 295–306.

<sup>44</sup> Anonymus Vaticanus, *Questiones VIII–IX Ethicorum* 9 q. 15, f. 63<sup>ra</sup>: “utrum felix felicitate practica indiget amicis utilibus et delectabilibus et honestis... si questio ista querat de felicitate practica, sic distinguendum est de felicitate ista practica, quia uel ista felicitas est perfecta et in statu perfectissimo, aut est felicitas imperfecta. Et secundum hoc dicendum est primo ad questionem istam quod felix felicitate practica perfecta non indiget amicis utilibus, nec delectabilibus, nec amicis uirtuosis; presubponit tamen istos amicos. Secundo est dicendum quod felix felicitate practica imperfecta talibus amicis indiget. Primum determinatur sic: quia indigentia est respectu carentie, sed iste qui sic est felix non caret talibus amicis, ipsos tamen presubponit, sicut aliqua necessaria requisita ad suam felicitatem continuandam... Secundum determinatur sic: quia ille qui sic est (felix) felicitate practica imperfecta possibile est quod per infortunium bona utilia que habet amittat, in quorum acquisitione dolorem et laborem et habuit... sed ad hoc quod bona utilia que amisit recuperet indiget amicis utilibus qui sibi huiusmodi bona utilia administrent. Sed ut a dolore quem habuit in amissione talium bonorum utilium releuetur indiget amicis delectabilibus; ut autem in operabilibus uirtuosis finiat uitam suam indiget amicis uirtuosis qui ipsum dirigant in talibus, ut non plus quam necesse sit sic in prosperis gloriatur, nec in suis aduersitatibus deprimatur”. Unfortunately, the author does not explain further the difference between perfect and imperfect political happiness, which is not present in other commentaries.

<sup>45</sup> On the discussion of justice and friendship as general virtues in authors such as Godfrey of Fontaines and James of Viterbo see Bonnie Kent, “Justice, Passion, and Another’s Good: Aristotle Among the Theologians”, in *Nach der Verurteilung von 1277*:

Walter Burley's commentary. Commenting on the claim at the beginning of book 8 that the legislator cares more for friendship than for justice, Burley does not understand that Aristotle refers here to political friendship, which leads him to declare that in the community justice is more important than friendship, the latter being reserved to small groups of people.<sup>46</sup> In so doing, Burley is not aware that he reduces the political ties of the citizens, ties that consist in political friendship that goes beyond justice, to contracts and laws.

All of this can be seen as a consequence of the answer given by commentators to one of the thorniest problems concerning friendship in the *Ethics*. At the beginning of book 8, Aristotle simply declares without further explanation that friendship has to be a virtue or a consequence of the virtues (*EN* 8.1, 1155a3–4). Since he had already spoken in book 4 of a virtue that resembles friendship except that it involves no passion—a virtue that Aquinas and, following him, the medieval commentators call *affabilitas*<sup>47</sup>—the first problem faced by medieval commentators was to distinguish friendship from *affabilitas*. While *affabilitas* is always considered a virtue, because Aristotle deals with it in the book dedicated to the *social* virtues and declares adulation as its corresponding vice, there is a debate about whether or not friendship is a virtue.<sup>48</sup> While the Anonymous of Erfurt rejects the position that both *affabilitas* and friendship might be general virtues, Giles of Orléans prefers to regard *affabilitas* as a general virtue and friendship as a particular one; in his own words, friendship is a sort of particular justice.<sup>49</sup> This position implies that political friendship, treated in book 9 and thus belonging to friendship and not to *affabilitas*, should be considered a sort of particular justice and consequently as a private human relation towards other persons, not towards the common good, as it is in Aristotle. And although it is possible to find authors who still conceive political friend-

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*Philosophie und Theologie an der Universität von Paris im letzten Viertel des 13. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Jan A. Aertsen, Kent Emery, and Andreas Speer (Berlin–New York, 2001), 704–718.

<sup>46</sup> Walter Burley, *Expositio super decem libros Ethicorum* 8.1 (Venice, 1481), f. T2.

<sup>47</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Sententiae libri Ethicorum* 4.14, pp. 247–248; Giles of Orléans, *Questiones in Ethicam* 4 q. 18, f. 212<sup>va–vb</sup>; Anonymous of Erfurt, *Questiones in Ethicam* 4 q. 19, f. 103<sup>rb</sup>.

<sup>48</sup> The debate has no implications for the other positions advanced by the different commentators. Giles of Orléans and the Anonymus Vaticanus accept that friendship is a virtue, unlike the Anonymous of Erfurt and the Anonymous of Paris. Besides, the debate consists mainly in the question of whether friendship should be placed within the intellectual or the sensual appetite and whether it is a passion.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Giles of Orléans, *Questiones Ethicorum* 8 q. 1, f. 225<sup>ra</sup>.

ship as a virtue towards the common good, as Albert does, the fact that he considers political friendship as only friendship *secundum quid* leads to the same devaluation of the political feature of Aristotelian friendship.<sup>50</sup>

Friendship is therefore perceived as a relationship implying a limited number of people and not as a tie that binds the political community. The commentators tend to reduce friendship to virtuous friendship with the consequent separation between the private and public spheres, citizenship being conceived in an atomistic way. Keeping in mind that the virtuous is identified with the philosopher and that he should not take part in political activities, as these commentators maintain,<sup>51</sup> we can conclude that in the commentaries on the *Ethics* written at the Arts Faculty, there is an overvaluation of the individual and a loss of his necessary relations within the political community.<sup>52</sup>

### *Happiness and Friends*

If we examine the relationship in the commentaries between truth and friendship and the happy man's need for virtuous friends, the consequences of this conception of friendship are clearly understandable. In the question raised in book 1, what should we choose in case of conflict between friendship and truth, the commentators are unanimous in answering that the question makes no sense in the case of virtuous friends, since perfect friendship is in accord with truth. But admitting the possibility of conflict, then truth must be chosen, since it is closer to the *bonum ultimum* of human life, which is contemplative happiness,

<sup>50</sup> Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 9.12 (831), p. 699.

<sup>51</sup> Congruent with this lack of interest in political matters is the relative absence of Cicero as an authority in these commentaries. As James McEvoy asserts, the scholars were probably aware that Cicero's ideas had their source in Aristotle; see James McEvoy, "The Sources and Significance of Henry of Ghent's Disputed Question, 'Is Friendship a Virtue?'" in *Henry of Ghent: Proceedings of the International Colloquium on the Occasion of the 700th Anniversary of his Death (1293)*, ed. Willy Vanhamel (Leuven, 1996), 123–124.

<sup>52</sup> There is nevertheless an exception to this understanding of the Aristotelian theory of political friendship. Peter of Auvergne, who defends the supremacy of philosophical speculation over political activity, raises some questions in which it is clear that he conceives political friendship in a properly Aristotelian way, since, on the one hand, he associates it with concord, and, on the other, he conceives it as the binding that supports every political regime. See *Quaestiones super libros Politicorum* 5 q. 2, 5, 7, MS Paris, BnF lat. 16089, ff. 305<sup>vb</sup>–306<sup>ra</sup>, 306<sup>vb</sup>–307<sup>rb</sup>, 307<sup>vb</sup>–308<sup>ra</sup>; Bologna, BU 1625, ff. 73<sup>ra</sup>, 73<sup>vb</sup>, 74<sup>ra</sup>.

whereas friendship is nothing more than an external good. As Giles of Orléans points out, contemplative happiness *non consistit in coniuncto amicorum* but is *respectu Dei et aliorum separatorum*.<sup>53</sup> Besides the fact that this reference to contemplation implies an identification of truth with the vision of God, an influence from Eustratius that goes beyond the Aristotelian text,<sup>54</sup> the significance of Giles's answer rests in the idea that happiness is not achieved through friends and therefore happiness does not consist in friendship. This means that happiness is always a state superior to friendship.

The relationship between happiness and friendship is dealt with in book 9, in the chapters where Aristotle discusses the happy man's need for virtuous friends and the number of them, chapters that come immediately after the chapter on "virtuous egoism". While the theory of "virtuous egoism" is maintained by medieval commentators, the happy man's need for friends is substantially altered. According to the Greek philosopher, the happy man needs virtuous friends to render his activity more continuous, due to the contact with other virtuous men, but mainly to reach self-consciousness of his happiness through the co-perception with other men. The famous sentence that the friend is another self (*alter ipse*) gains its entire significance only in philosophical speculation. Contrary to God, who is pure act, the happy man cannot always be active or thinking about himself. Because he must think of other things, he needs other men in order to achieve self-consciousness (*EN* 9.9).<sup>55</sup>

This thesis is not emphasised by medieval commentators, except in Albert's second commentary,<sup>56</sup> which had no influence on this issue. For the Parisian masters the happy man does not need virtuous friends in

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<sup>53</sup> Giles of Orléans, *Questiones in Ethicam* 1 q. 15, f. 198<sup>rb-va</sup>. The same question in the commentary hypothetically attributed to Radulphus Brito, *Questiones in Ethicam* 1 q. 19, MS Vatican City, BAV lat. 832, ff. 4<sup>vb-5<sup>rb</sup></sup>; Anonymous of Erlangen, *Questiones in Ethicam* 1 q. 16, f. 50<sup>va</sup>; Anonymous of Erfurt, *Questiones in Ethicam* 1 q. 16, f. 88<sup>ra-b</sup>; Peter of Auvergne, (Questions on the *Nicomachean Ethics*) 1 q. 26, ed. Anthony J. Celano, "Peter of Auvergne's Questions on Books I and II of the *Ethica nicomachea*: A Study and Critical Edition", *Mediæval Studies* 48 (1986), 65–66; John of Tytynsale, *Questiones in libros Ethicorum* 1 q. 20, ff. 150<sup>vb-151<sup>ra</sup></sup>.

<sup>54</sup> *The Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle in the Latin Translation of Robert Grossseteste, Bishop of Lincoln († 1253) 1: Eustratius on Book I and the Anonymous Scholia on Books II, III and IV*, ed. H. Paul F. Mercken (Leiden, 1973), 71–72.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. David Lefebvre, "Bonheur et amitié: Que font les hommes heureux?", in *Aristote: Bonheur et vertus*, ed. Pierre Destrée (Paris, 2003), 147–174.

<sup>56</sup> Albert the Great, *Ethica* 9.3.2–3, pp. 587–592.



the process that leads to contemplative happiness, which is obviously in conformity with the Aristotelian idea that the act of virtue is essentially individual. According to Peter of Auvergne, who raises this question in the first book, friends are not an essential element of happiness, but only a complement, since virtuous friends lead the virtuous man to perform acts according to virtue. Nevertheless, they are not a part of the process that leads to happiness; they are simply an element that gives a virtuous man the opportunity to do good.<sup>57</sup> This theory is based on Albert's commentary, which stresses that friends are not essential: they are necessary to the virtuous man only in order to teach, so that he can show the possession of happiness and science.<sup>58</sup>

From another point of view, the Anonymous of Paris asserts that the happy man needs friends not because he cannot achieve happiness by himself, but because philosophical speculation by two is more powerful and durable than speculation by an isolated man.<sup>59</sup> But in this author we do not find any statement about such a thing as a community of wise and virtuous men. If we want to find statements that echo the corporative spirit of the Arts Faculty, we have to look at the answers given by Giles of Orléans and by the Anonymus Vaticanus. The former claims that the happy man needs friends, because it belongs to virtue more to bestow than to receive benefits, an argument that he takes *ipsis verbis* from Aristotle. Still, Giles considers that for contemplative happiness the happy man needs hardly any friends. This necessity is conceived in the form of a professor who directs his pupil, since Giles declares that the happy man needs friends to direct him in his operations, which means that Giles does not consider the possibility that due to the friend, the happy man may achieve consciousness of his own happiness.<sup>60</sup> The Anonymus Vaticanus, in contrast, denies that the

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<sup>57</sup> Peter of Auvergne, (*Questions on the Nicomachean Ethics*) 1 q. 37, p. 78: "felix... indiget amicis non propter operationem, quia, ex quo felix est, recte operatur... sed indiget amicis ut melius operetur et melius delectetur".

<sup>58</sup> Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 9.10 (819), p. 690.

<sup>59</sup> Anonymous of Paris, *Questiones supra VIII–IX Ethicorum* 9 q. 7, f. 65<sup>rb–va</sup>. For the idea that two are more powerful than one see also Giles of Orléans, *Questiones in Ethicam* 8 q. 2, f. 225<sup>rb</sup>: "sunt amici necessarii quantum ad operationem actionis interioris (*MS*: exterioris), quia potentiores sunt speculari duo quam unus"; Anonymus Vaticanus, *Questiones supra VIII–IX Ethicorum* 9 q. 15, f. 63<sup>rb</sup>: "simul duo uenientes ad intelligere et agere efficiuntur potentiores".

<sup>60</sup> Giles of Orléans, *Questiones in Ethicam* 9 q. 11, f. 229<sup>va</sup>: "felix ergo indiget amico dirigente ipsum in sua operatione, sed felix dirigit operationem suam ex operibus amicorum... notandum tamen quod duplex est felix, felicitate scilicet pollitica et felix

happy man might need friends, since happiness is sufficient in itself, as is written in the first book of the *Ethics*. Nevertheless, just as the intellect requires the inferior faculties of the soul for its activity, the happy man also requires (*presubponit*) virtuous friends who can direct him in philosophical speculation. Unlike the other commentators, who refute the necessity of useful and pleasant friends, the Anonymus Vaticanus stresses that the philosopher requires useful friends to support him, so that he can completely devote himself to philosophy. This author bases his answer on the first book of the *Metaphysics*, where Aristotle speaks of the Egyptian priests being supported by the political community so that they become free to undertake philosophical speculation.<sup>61</sup> This quotation is quite interesting, since it was used by Parisian masters such as John of Jandun, Peter of Auvergne, and Guido Terreni in order to defend the idea that the teaching of philosophy should be financed by the State.<sup>62</sup> Indeed, the commentaries on books 8 and 9 by the Arts Faculty are full of statements expressing the superiority of the philosophical

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felicitate contemplatiua... sed felix hoc secundo modo paucissimo indiget, alius autem multis indiget"; cf. Aristotle, *Ethica nicomachea* 9.9 (1169b10–12), p. 557 (*recensio cognita*): "felix indiget [amicis] propter uirtutem, quia uirtutis est magis benefacere quam bene pati. Felix autem est perfecte uirtuosus, ideo amicis indiget quibus beneficiat".

<sup>61</sup> Anonymus Vaticanus, *Questiones VIII–IX Ethicorum* 9 q. 15, ff. 62<sup>vb</sup>–63<sup>rb</sup>: "si autem questio querat utrum felix felicitate speculatiua indigeat talibus amicis, dicendum est quod non. Et primo determinatur quod non indiget amicis utilibus, quia ille qui minimis bonis utilibus contentus est non indiget amicis utilibus. Sed felix felicitate speculatiua est huiusmodi, quia, sicut apparet primo Metaphisice, sufficit tali habere necessariam ad uitam secundum cursum nature, et hoc satis innuit Philosophus in quarto huius. Ideo et cetera. Dico tamen secundo quod huiusmodi amicos presubponit iste felix, quia, sicut apparet primo Metaphisice, summi sacerdotes in Egipto acquisitis necessariis ad uitam inceperunt (pro *add. MS*) philosophari. Tales autem erant felices felicitate huiusmodi... secundo determinatur quod non indiget talis felix amicis delectabilibus, quia ille qui sibi habet delectationem semper anexam amicis delectabilibus non indiget... dico tamen quod tales amicos presubponit, quia huiusmodi felix presubponit delectabilia bona que ipsum... condelectant... Tertio determinatur quod non indiget amicis honestis, quia indigentia est respectu carencie. Sed talis felix non caret amicis uirtuosis... dico tamen quod presubponit huiusmodi amicos. Cuius ratio est, quia ille cuius operatio propria est secundum supremam eius potentiam, secundum supremum (*MS*: sub primum) eius habitum presubponit operationes aliarum potentiarum in ipso existencium et habitus ipsarum. Sed operatio istius felicitatis est secundum intellectum speculatiuum, qui est suprema potentia in ipso existens secundum habitum sapientie, qui est eius supremus (*MS*: sub primus) habitus. Ergo talis felix necessario presubponit ipsas uirtutes alias ab ipsa sapientia, que sunt habitus potentiarum inferiorum in ipso existencium. Sed huiusmodi felix qui tales uirtutes (presubponit), presubponit etiam amicos uirtuosos, quia per tales amicos iuuatur quantum ad esse intensius istarum uirtutum, et per consequens quantum ad intensius esse sue felicitatis".

<sup>62</sup> Toste, "Nobiles, optimi viri, philosophi", 303.

life, which supports the professional corporatism of the Arts Faculty. It seems that every suggestion the Aristotelian text can give is widely used by the commentators.<sup>63</sup> Not only do we often find the famous question about whether the teaching of philosophy should be paid for, we also find the assertion of a social superiority and the consequent honour and reverence that should be due to philosophers.<sup>64</sup> However, this idea of a socio-professional caste does not lead to the affirmation of a sort of *academia*, in which the masters can undertake philosophical speculation together or at least debate and solve problems together. It is perhaps the Aristotelian idea that perfect friendship requires a strict equality that inhibits the development of the idea of an *academia*. In fact, it seems that in these commentaries the relationship of the happy man to other virtuous men is always conceived as a hierarchical relationship between master and student, and thus as a relationship between beneficiary and benefited—which rules out the idea that two philosophers can *conphilosophari*, as well as the idea that the happy man reaches consciousness of his happiness through philosophical speculation with other men.<sup>65</sup> The affirmation of the superiority of philosophical activity remains the epicentre of virtuous friendship, as conceived first in Albert and later in the commentaries by the Arts Faculty.

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<sup>63</sup> See e.g. Anonymous of Erfurt, *Questiones in Ethicam* 8 q. 12, f. 111<sup>vb</sup>, on the impossibility of friendship between the virtuous and the ignorant: “uirtuosus non potest habere perfectam amicitiam nisi ad illum quem scit dignum tali amicitia. Cum ergo ignorans et paruus non sit dignus tali amicitia, non potest uirtuosus ad ipsos habere amicitiam perfectam”. This is at odds with Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.23.1 ad 3, *Opera* 8: 164, and obviously with Christian doctrine.

<sup>64</sup> It is nonetheless impossible to find in these commentaries reflections on the relationship between master and student, which is found only in Conrad of Megenberg’s *Monastica*, from 1348, as shown by Jacques Verger, “Rapports hiérarchiques et amicitia au sein des populations universitaires médiévales”, in *Hiérarchies et services au moyen âge: Séminaire et sociétés, idéologies et croyances au moyen âge*, ed. Claude Carozzi and Huguette Taviani-Carozzi (Aix-en-Provence, 2001), 304–307.

<sup>65</sup> In the question *utrum sublimitas et excellentia status corrumpat amicitiam aliquorum ad inuicem*, the Anonymus Vaticanus, *Questiones VIII–IX Ethicorum* 8 q. 12, f. 55<sup>vb</sup>, following Aristotle, responds that “excellencia status unius amici... in moribus et scientie dignitate corrumpit amicitiam” giving the example of two “socii in grammatica uel logica informati in simul et quod quamdiu fuerunt, fuerunt amici, et quod postea unus profecerit in uirtutibus et scientiis et alter non, tunc ille qui sic profecit scit se et iudicat esse maioris dignitatis et bonitatis alio et sic, per consequens, iste qui sic excellit alium in moribus et scientiis amplius non uult esse equalis illi quem excellit (isto *add. MS*) et per consequens corrumpitur amicitiam inter tales”. Although the Anonymus Vaticanus states that the *felix* can communicate “cum duobus uel tribus... in speculatione intensa confendo de suis dubitationibus cum illis”, he seems to envisage the relationship of the happy man

*Conclusions*

The theory of perfect friendship, unsupplied with charity as its grounds, and together with other features present in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, supports an anthropology in which human means are totally sufficient. Nevertheless, as I have tried to show, the Aristotelian theory of friendship is much less important than the theory of contemplative happiness, which is the true central point of these commentaries. We can thus conclude that when books 8 and 9 were commented on at the Arts Faculty, they did not give rise to a theory of the philosophical life, but rather allowed masters to express the theory of a philosophical life based on the theory of contemplative happiness, as outlined in books 1 and 10. If truth, which becomes identified with contemplation, is preferable to friends and friendship is not a necessary element of happiness, this is by reason of the significance attributed to contemplative happiness. For these commentators the idea of “virtuous egoism”, in which man loves the activity of his intellect, seems to be a later emphasis within the discussion of happiness and the related idea of the philosophical life devoted to speculation. This is the reason why the happy man’s need for friends is not developed by the commentators in the way it was by Aristotle. Indeed, for the commentators, friends are always an external good and, as a result, they have a status similar to the accident. Thus we do not find in these authors a developed theory of philosophical friendship or an apologia of a sort of *academia*.

It must be emphasized that philosophical activity is exclusively conceived as individual philosophical speculation and that contemplation is not regarded as the end of a process achieved through a dialogue between friends. And even though friendship is still considered necessary to man, given his natural tendency to association, friendship is seen as a private relation. It is quite ironic that at a pre-Cartesian moment these authors tended to concentrate on the individual and not on the community, on individual happiness rather than social relationships. The ambit of the Aristotelian theory of friendship is thus reduced. As the commentators tried to explain the Aristotelian text, at the same time they were also interested in expressing how they wanted their own lives to be.

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to these “paucis hominibus a quibus potest doceri” as an educational relationship (8 q. 9, f. 55<sup>rb</sup>).



IV

THE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURIES



THE CARDINAL VIRTUES IN  
MIEVIAL COMMENTARIES ON THE  
*NICOMACHEAN ETHICS*, 1250–1350

ISTVÁN P. BEJ CZY

The scheme of the four cardinal virtues, first introduced in Plato's *Republic*, found wide acceptance among Neoplatonic and Stoic philosophers of Greek and Latin antiquity. From patristic times, the scheme was absorbed into Christian moral thought—indeed, so completely that the scheme's ancient roots were largely forgotten in the early Middle Ages and only rediscovered in the twelfth century.<sup>1</sup> However, the four cardinal virtues are alien to the ethical system of Aristotle. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance are included among the virtues, but they do not have any privileged position. Prudence is one of five intellectual virtues while justice, fortitude, and temperance figure among the eleven moral virtues. To be sure, prudence lies at the root of all moral virtues while justice, understood as general or legal justice, coincides with perfect virtue; still, the four virtues known as cardinal do not constitute a special quartet in Aristotle's ethics, let alone a scheme of principal virtues that cover the entire range of morality. Medieval commentators on the *Nicomachean Ethics* therefore had good reasons to set the scheme of the cardinal virtues aside. Nevertheless, many of them sought to reconcile the scheme with Aristotle's classification of the virtues, even though they sometimes admitted that Aristotle never actually distinguished four cardinal virtues.<sup>2</sup> In this essay I shall examine the role of the cardinal virtues in medieval commentaries on Aristotle's *Ethics* written until the mid-fourteenth century. I will argue that the efforts of Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas to retain the scheme failed to

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<sup>1</sup> See *Virtue and Ethics in the Twelfth Century*, ed. István P. Bejczy and Richard G. Newhauser (Leiden, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> See Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 1.16, *Opera omnia* (Rome, 1882–) 47: 58; Gerald of Odo, *Sententia et expositio cum questionibus... super libros Ethicorum* 2 q. 21 (Venice, 1500), f. 35<sup>va</sup>.



convince the majority of commentators active around 1300, and that Gerald of Odo and especially John Buridan provided more successful solutions.

Before we start to analyse the commentary tradition, it should be noted that interpreting ancient philosophical and literary texts in the light of the cardinal virtues constituted a tradition beginning in the early twelfth century. Cicero's *De inventione* and Macrobius' *Commentarii in somnium Scipionis*, the two most frequently quoted classical sources for the cardinal virtues, became the object of several commentaries around the 1130s. Some of these commentaries associate the four virtues even with passages that do not appear to allude to them.<sup>3</sup> Similar examples can be found in commentaries on other works, such as Martianus Capella's *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*,<sup>4</sup> Virgil's *Aeneis*,<sup>5</sup> and the *Odae* of Horace.<sup>6</sup> The most prominent examples from the later Middle Ages are doubtless the commentaries on the *Disticha Catonis*. From the thirteenth century, many commentators emphasize that the main theme of the work is the cardinal virtues, though the scheme of the four virtues is actually absent from it.<sup>7</sup> Hence, medieval commentators on ancient

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<sup>3</sup> Thierry of Chartres, *Commentarius super De inventione* 1.16.22, ed. Karin M. Fredborg, *The Latin Rhetorical Commentaries by Thierry of Chartres* (Toronto 1988), 113, associates a passage appearing in the first book with the four virtues whereas Cicero mentions them only in the second book. William of Conches mentions the cardinal virtues four times in his commentary on Macrobius before reaching the passage where Macrobius himself introduces them; see *Glosae super Macrobium* 1.1.7, 1.1.8, 1.4.4 and 1.6.41, ed. Helen Rodney Lemay (forthcoming).

<sup>4</sup> The commentary on the first book has five references to the virtues whereas Martianus Capella only names them in the second book, in a single passage. See Bernardus Silvestris (?), *The Commentary on Martianus Capella's De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii Attributed to Bernardus Silvestris* 4, 5, 7, 8 and 12, ed. Haijo J. Westra (Toronto, 1986), pp. 87–88, 94–96, 166–170, 173, 225 (only most of the commentary on Book One is extant).

<sup>5</sup> See Bernardus Silvestris (?), *The Commentary on the First Six Books of the Aeneid of Vergil Commonly Attributed to Bernardus Silvestris* 5 and 6, ed. Julian W. Jones and Elizabeth F. Jones (Lincoln, NE–London, 1977), pp. 26, 39–40, 66. The *Aeneis* does not mention the cardinal virtues at all.

<sup>6</sup> See Karsten Friis-Jensen, "Horatius lyricus et ethicus: Two Twelfth-Century School Texts on Horace's Poems", *Cahiers de l'Institut du moyen âge grec et latin* 57 (1988), 104, for an anonymous glossator explaining at length that Horace in *Odae* 3.1–4 "ad quatuor principales uirtutes nos inuitat".

<sup>7</sup> See Richard Hazelton, "The Christianization of 'Cato': The *Disticha Catonis* in the Light of Late Mediaeval Commentaries", *Mediaeval Studies* 19 (1957), esp. 165–167 with n. 41. To Hazelton's survey can be added MSS Paris, BnF lat. 3234, ff. 58<sup>ra</sup>–69<sup>th</sup> (14th cent.); lat. 8023, ff. 1<sup>r</sup>–36<sup>v</sup> (15th cent.); lat. 8259, ff. 1<sup>r</sup>–36<sup>r</sup> (15th cent.).

texts not only discussed the cardinal virtues where they found them, they also introduced the cardinal virtues in a number of cases where they did not find them. Seen from this perspective, the appearance of the cardinal virtues in commentaries on Aristotle's *Ethics* is not as surprising as it might seem at first glance.

Commentaries on the first, incomplete translations of the *Nicomachean Ethics* were written from the early thirteenth century. The commentator known as Pseudo-Peckham refers in one passage to fortitude, temperance, prudence, and justice as four (main?) "consuetudinal" virtues,<sup>8</sup> while the Dominican friar Robert Kilwardby (†1279) claims that the cardinal virtues determine the actions of all other virtues.<sup>9</sup> Although Kilwardby apparently thinks the cardinal virtues compatible with Aristotle's system,<sup>10</sup> he admits in his commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sententiae* that Aristotle had a much narrower understanding of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance than is implied by their conception as cardinal virtues.<sup>11</sup>

Only after Robert Grosseteste finished his complete translation did it become fully apparent that the *Nicomachean Ethics* centred around a well defined set of moral and intellectual virtues, so that questions about the appropriateness of Aristotle's division of the virtues were likely to arise. Eustratius of Nicaea (†1117), whose partial commentary on the *Ethics* Grosseteste translated together with Aristotle's text, already suggested that the four virtues known as cardinal somehow comprised Aristotle's

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<sup>8</sup> See Pseudo-Peckham, *Commentarium in Ethicam nouam et ueterem* 22 q. 1; likewise Arnulf of Provence, *Divisio scientiarum*, ed. Claude Lafleur, in id. and Jeanne Carrier, *Quatre introductions à la philosophie au XIIIe siècle: Textes critiques et étude historique* (Montréal–Paris, 1988), 336. I owe these references to Valeria Buffon. Both passages are fully quoted in her contribution to this volume (p. 28 n. 50).

<sup>9</sup> See Robert Kilwardby, *Commentarii supra libros Ethicorum* 2.7, ed. Anthony Celano (forthcoming): "per virtutes logicales intendit quattor virtutes cardinales, que communes sunt respectu aliarum. Et si interius respiciantur, inveniuntur concurrere ad unamquamque virtutem specialem, dico, secundum suas operationes". Kilwardby apparently alludes to Philip the Chancellor's concept of the general cardinal virtues (see below, p. 204). I owe this reference and the next one to Anthony Celano.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* 1.1: "Nota quod in hoc argumento potest haberi ab Aristotile que sit doctrina civilis, quia illa que instruit homines circa quattor virtutes cardinales, scilicet fortitudinem, prudenciam, temperanciam et iusticiam. Per hoc enim quod dicit ipsam preordinare militarem, innuit ipsam instruere homines circa fortitudinem. Per hoc quod ordinat rhetoricam significat ipsam instruere homines circa prudenciam".

<sup>11</sup> See id., *Quaestiones in librum tertium Sententiarum*, II: *Tugendlehre* q. 31 ad 4–5, ed. Gerhard Leibold (Munich, 1985), p. 118.

remaining virtues.<sup>12</sup> Grosseteste's *Notule*, which in some manuscripts accompany his translation, contain a similar suggestion.<sup>13</sup>

The first commentaries on Grosseteste's translation (apart from Grosseteste's own *Notule* and *Summa in Ethica nicomachea*)<sup>14</sup> were those of Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas. Both aimed to explain Aristotle's *Ethics* in its own terms, but nevertheless tried to reconcile Aristotle's classification of the virtues with the fourfold scheme of the cardinal virtues. One problem they had to solve was the status of prudence. In Aristotle's system, prudence stood apart as an intellectual virtue, even though the moral virtues could not exist without it. Traditionally, however, prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance counted as the four principal moral virtues. Before the thirteenth century, the idea that prudence was no moral virtue itself occurred to hardly anyone except Peter Abelard.<sup>15</sup> Even after the rediscovery of Aristotle's *Ethics*, a number of

<sup>12</sup> See Eustratius of Nicea, *In Ethicam nicomacheam* 6.11, MS Oxford, All Souls 84, f. 140<sup>ra</sup>: "Sicut et in practicis uirtutibus generales diximus uirtutes fortitudinem, temperantiam, iusticiam, assumpsimus autem et alteras specialiores, liberalitatem, magnificenciam, magnanimitatem, sic et prudentia uirtus existens intellectiua et generalis habet sub ipsam deinceps hic assumptas: eubuliam, solertiam et synesim syggnonim"; cf. the anonymous 13th-century gloss *ibid.*: "Quod sicut uirtutes enumerare 4o libro reducuntur ad tres generales actiuas, sic hic enumerate ad prudentiam". See also below, n. 34.

<sup>13</sup> See Robert Grosseteste, *Notule in Ethica nicomachea et in commentatores grecos in eadem*, MS Oxford, All Souls 84, f. 65<sup>vb</sup> marg. inf. (on 3.13), discussing the virtue regulating the pleasures of smell, sight, and touch: "Dubitari potest ad quam cardinalem uirtutem moralem huiusmodi uirtus reducitur" (apparently assuming that such a reduction is always possible). Although Aristotle distinguishes this virtue from temperance (which relates to touch and taste, as Grosseteste points out *ibid.* f. 66<sup>r</sup> marg. inf.), "nobis autem uidetur quod temperantia dupliciter dicitur, proprie scilicet et communiter: proprie quidem secundum quod auctor tractat de ea, communiter uero secundum quod ipsa est medietas circa delectaciones et tristicias sensibiles". See also *ibid.* f. 46<sup>r</sup> marg. inf. (on 2.4), stating that all virtuous acts are done "prudenter, temperate, iuste et fortiter"; f. 49<sup>rb</sup> marg. (on 2.6), calling temperance and fortitude "principales uirtutes"; f. 55<sup>v</sup> marg. inf. (on 3.4): "Dicitur quandoque uoluntas appetitus situs in anima sensibili secundum quod moderatus est a uoluntate que est rationalis appetitus boni, et secundum hanc uoluntatis significacionem dicuntur uirtutes 3 practice, scilicet iusticia, temperancia, fortitudo". On the *Notule* and MS All Souls 84, see Samuel H. Thomson, *The Writings of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, 1235–1253* (Cambridge, 1940), 85–86; see also David F. Lines, *Aristotle's Ethics in the Italian Renaissance (ca. 1300–1650): The Universities and the Problem of Moral Education* (Leiden, 2002), 464–465.

<sup>14</sup> In the *Summa*, MS Oxford, All Souls 84, ff. 1<sup>ra</sup>–10<sup>ra</sup>, Grosseteste merely lists the subjects discussed in each chapter of the *Nicomachean Ethics*; it is not his aim to comment on the text. For the *Summa*, see Thomson, *The Writings of Robert Grosseteste*, 88; Lines, *Aristotle's Ethics*, 464.

<sup>15</sup> For Abelard's classification of the cardinal virtues, see John Marenbon, *The Philosophy of Peter Abelard* (Cambridge, 1997), 283–287. Abelard believed that prudence, according to Aristotle, was a *scientia* rather than a virtue.

thirteenth- and fourteenth-century theologians argued that prudence was also a moral virtue, since it determined the precepts underlying moral action.<sup>16</sup> Remarkably, a similar argument recurs in Grosseteste's *Notule* on the *Nicomachean Ethics* as well as in both of Albert the Great's commentaries on this work. Grosseteste argues that prudence is an intellectual virtue in its cognitive function, but a moral virtue in that it directs the operations of justice, temperance, and fortitude;<sup>17</sup> following Eustratius of Nicaea, Albert affirms that prudence occupies a middle ground between the intellectual and moral virtues.<sup>18</sup> The same idea appears in Aquinas's theological work, from where it entered into several theological and moral writings of the later Middle Ages.<sup>19</sup> In his commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aquinas refrains from using the idea, but nevertheless states that prudence requires the rightness of the appetite in the same way as the moral virtues (*ad modum moralium virtutum requirens rectitudinem appetitus*),<sup>20</sup> thus assimilating prudence to the moral virtues after all.

<sup>16</sup> The first appears to have been Robert Kilwardby, *Quaestiones in librum tertium Sententiarum* II q. 30, pp. 113–115.

<sup>17</sup> See Robert Grosseteste, *Notule*, f. 43<sup>r</sup> marg. inf. (on 1.13): “prudentia quo ad primam operationem suam, que est cognitio agendorum exteriorum et omittendorum, uirtus est intellectualis et speculatiua; inquantum autem extendit se in directionem operorum iusticie, temperantie et fortitudinis, inter uirtutes morales et actiuas computatur”.

<sup>18</sup> See Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 6.1 (462), ed. Wilhelm Kübel, *Opera omnia* (Münster, 1951–) 14: 394; id., *Ethica* 6.2.9, *Opera omnia*, ed. Stephanus C.A. Borgnet (Paris, 1890–1899) 7: 417–418. For Albert's teaching on prudence as a semi-moral virtue in his commentaries on Aristotle's *Ethics*, see Jörn Müller, *Natürliche Moral und philosophische Ethik bei Albertus Magnus* (Münster, 2001), 177–183. Albert was followed by Ulrich of Strasbourg, *De summo bono* 6.2.5, ed. Franz-Bernhard Stammkötter, “De virtutibus secundum principia philosophica: Die philosophische Tugendlehre bei Albert dem Grossen und Ulrich von Strassburg” (Ph.D. diss. Ruhr-Universität Bochum, 1996), 309–310 (available online).

<sup>19</sup> See Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* III.33.2.1 q. 3, ed. Pierre F. Mandonnet and M. Ferdinand Moos (Paris, 1929–1947) 3: 1047; id., *Summa theologiae* I.II.58.3 ad 1 and II.II.47.4, *Opera omnia* 6: 374, 8: 352; cf. Giles of Rome, *De regimine principum* 1.2.2 (Rome, 1607; repr. Aalen, 1967), 46–47; Engelbert of Admont, *Speculum virtutum* 12.2, ed. Bernard Pez, *Bibliotheca ascetica antiqua-nova* 3 (Regensburg, 1724; repr. Farnborough, 1967), 444–446; Richard of Mediavilla, *Super quatuor libros Sententiarum* III.23 art. 2.3 ad 1 and III.33 art. 2.4 (Brixen, 1591; repr. Frankfurt am Main, 1963), 3: 242, 382; Thomas of Strasbourg, *Commentaria in IIII libros Sententiarum* III.33 q. 1 (Venice, 1564; repr. Ridgewood, 1965) 2: f. 48<sup>b</sup>. Cf. also Henry of Rimini, *Tractatus de quatuor virtutibus cardinalibus* (Speyer, ca. 1472) Prol., f. 12<sup>r</sup>: “Inter virtutes autem morales ... prudentia prior ac dignior esse videtur”.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 6.4, p. 347; cf. *ibid.*: prudence “non tamen est cum sola ratione... sed requiritur rectitudinem appetitus”. For Aquinas's con-

But even if prudence were somehow a moral virtue with a special status, how could one plausibly argue that justice, fortitude, and temperance likewise stood above the other moral virtues in Aristotle's system? In order to provide an answer, both Albert and Aquinas have recourse to the idea that the cardinal virtues can be understood in both a general and a specific sense. In the general sense, the cardinal virtues are broad concepts on which the other virtues depend; in the specific sense, as defined by Aristotle, these four virtues stand on their own. Albert's immediate source for this idea is Philip the Chancellor's *Summa de bono* (1236).<sup>21</sup> Philip's notion of the cardinal virtues in their general sense apparently confirms the traditional view that prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance are mother concepts in a genealogy of virtues, with each cardinal virtue giving birth to a set of specific secondary virtues. But Philip states that *all four* cardinal virtues underlie any of the other moral virtues or indeed any mental disposition or human act with a claim to virtue. Specific moral virtues are no longer to be seen as daughters of one cardinal virtue in particular, but rather as conditioned by all four cardinal virtues, which together comprise the essentials of moral goodness. In thirteenth- and fourteenth-century theology, this idea made headway. Robert Kilwardby explains in his commentary on the *Sententiae* that every particular virtue is a compound of the four cardinal virtues rather than a species of one of them, since all virtues consist in *recte discernere* (prudence), *recte concupiscere* (temperance), *recte audere* (fortitude), and *recte attribuere* (justice).<sup>22</sup> Thomas Aquinas likewise claims in his *Summa theologiae* that the cardinal virtues represent four characteristics common to all virtues: *discretio*, *rectitudo*, *firmitas*, and *moderantia*.<sup>23</sup> Yet this idea receives criticism in Albert's and Aquinas's commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics*. In his second commentary, Albert rejects the theory as unsound and moreover as a theological

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ception of prudence, see Daniel Westberg, *Right Practical Reason: Aristotle, Action, and Prudence in Aquinas* (Oxford, 1994); Martin Rhonheimer, *Praktische Vernunft und Vernünftigkeit der Praxis: Handlungstheorie bei Thomas von Aquin in ihrer Entstehung aus dem Problemkontext der aristotelischen Ethik* (Berlin, 1994); Thomas S. Hibbs, *Virtue's Splendor: Wisdom, Prudence, and the Human Good* (New York, 2001).

<sup>21</sup> See Philip the Chancellor, *Summa de bono*, ed. Nikolaus Wicki (Bern, 1985), 754, 1069–1071; Rollen E. Houser, *The Cardinal Virtues: Aquinas, Albert, and Philip the Chancellor* (Toronto, 2004), 50–51.

<sup>22</sup> Richard Kilwardby, *Quaestiones in librum tertium Sententiarum* II q. 61, p. 258.

<sup>23</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* I.II.65.1 and II.II.123.11, *Opera omnia* 6: 418 (four characteristics), 10: 23: “virtutes cardinales seu principales dicuntur quae praecipue sibi vindicant id quod pertinet communiter ad virtutes”.

product which in any case has little relevance to philosophy.<sup>24</sup> Aquinas attributes the theory to Latin classics (Cicero, Seneca), as Albert does in his first commentary, but calls it inappropriate since it does not permit one to properly distinguish between the virtues. The virtues are better defined according to their subject matter, as Aristotle defined them.<sup>25</sup>

The criticism by Albert and Aquinas seemingly leaves little room for the scheme of the cardinal virtues in the framework of Aristotelian ethics. However, both insist that precisely in their specific, Aristotelian conception, justice, fortitude, and temperance are the principal moral virtues because they relate to the three foremost aspects of moral action: the even distribution of goods, which is the principal instance of rightness; the capacity to endure mortal danger for a just cause, which is the ultimate instance of courage; and the capacity to restrain the sense of touch, which is the supreme instance of moderation of the passions. Aristotle's remaining moral virtues concern matters of lesser importance and are therefore secondary. Aquinas even goes so far as to maintain that the four virtues are more appropriately called "cardinal" in their Aristotelian than in their general sense.<sup>26</sup> Avoiding the view that the cardinal virtues comprise the secondary virtues as their subspecies, Albert refers to the latter as *virtutes adiunctae*; Aquinas refers to them (in his theological work only) as *virtutes annexae*.<sup>27</sup>

The integration of the cardinal virtues into Aristotle's system, as proposed by Albert and Aquinas, had considerable success in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century theology. Even if Aquinas has actually more use for the general than for the specific cardinal virtues in his *Summa theologiae*, his argument that the cardinal virtues in their Aristotelian sense centre around the four most demanding aspects of moral life found acceptance among later theologians.<sup>28</sup> Also, the idea that justice, for-

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<sup>24</sup> Albert the Great, *Ethica* 3.2.1, p. 236; cf. *ibid.* 6.2.11, p. 420 (attributing the theory to Eustratius). See also Houser, *The Cardinal Virtues*, 60–61. Albert was followed by Ulrich of Strasbourg, *De summo bono* 6.2.5, esp. pp. 308–309.

<sup>25</sup> See Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 2.8, pp. 102–103; Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 2.6 (135), p. 120.

<sup>26</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 2.8, pp. 102–103; *Scriptum super Sententias* III.33.2.1 q. 1, 3: 1045–1046; *Summa theologiae* I.II.61.3–4, *Opera omnia* 6: 396–397; cf. *De virtutibus cardinalibus* 1, in *Quaestiones disputatae*, ed. P. Bazzi et al. (Turin–Rome, 1965), 815. See also Houser, *The Cardinal Virtues*, 66–73.

<sup>27</sup> For the cardinal virtues in Albert's commentaries on Aristotle's *Ethics*, see Müller, *Natürliche Moral*, 153–155.

<sup>28</sup> See e.g. William of La Mare, *Quaestiones in tertium et quartum librum Sententiarum* III.33

titude, and temperance constitute the principal moral virtues in Aristotle's system frequently recurs around 1300 in moral and theological literature.<sup>29</sup> Yet among the commentators on Aristotle's *Ethics* active in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, the solutions of Albert and Aquinas had only modest resonance.

To begin with, the idea that prudence is to some extent a moral virtue attracted few supporters. Although numerous commentators repeat the view of Aquinas that prudence implies rightness of appetite,<sup>30</sup> they generally remain faithful to Aristotle's notion of prudence as an intellectual virtue. Only John Dedecus (ca. 1350) calls prudence a *virtus media*,<sup>31</sup> while Henry of Friemar († 1320) refers to prudence as a moral virtue in one particular passage.<sup>32</sup> However, John Buridan († after 1358) states that although prudence is no moral virtue in the proper sense, it can be considered as such because of its necessary connection with the moral virtues and its role in directing all their actions.<sup>33</sup> Elsewhere

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q. 2, ed. Hans Kraml (Munich, 2001), pp. 123–124; Richard of Mediavilla, *Super libros Sententiarum* III.33 art. 1.7 ad 4, 3: 378; Durand of Saint Pourçain, *In Petri Lombardi Sententias theologicas commentariorum libri IIII* III.33 q. 5 (Venice, 1571; repr. Ridgewood, 1964), f. 273<sup>rb</sup>; Robert Holcot, *Super librum Sapientie* 108 (Basel, 1489), ff. q8<sup>vb</sup>–r1<sup>ra</sup> (on 8:7).

<sup>29</sup> See e.g. Richard of Mediavilla, *Super libros Sententiarum* III.33 art. 1.7, 3: 377; Giles of Rome, *De regimine principum* 1.2.3 and 5, pp. 51–56, 58–60 (see also Roberto Lambertini, “Il filosofo, il principe e la virtù: Note sulla ricezione e l’uso dell’*Etica nicomachea* nel *De regimine principum* di Egidio Romano”, *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 2 [1991], 257–258); Engelbert of Admont, *Speculum virtutum* 4.11–12 and 14, pp. 149–154, 160–163; Henry of Rimini, *Tractatus de quatuor virtutibus* Prol., f. 11<sup>v</sup>; *Summa rudium* 25 (Reutlingen, 1487), f. h5<sup>vb</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> See e.g. Radulphus Brito, *Questiones in Ethicam* 6 q. 142, MS Vatican City, BAV Vat. lat. 832, f. 35<sup>vb</sup>: “Verumtamen est notandum quod licet prudentia sit uirtus intellectualis, tamen presupponit semper appetitum rectum et per consequens alias virtutes morales”; Henry of Friemar, *Sententia totius libri Ethicorum* 6.5, MS Basel, ÖBU F.I.14, f. 159<sup>rb</sup>: “prudencia presupponit rectitudo appetitus de ipso fine que fit per virtutes morales et ideo ex necessitate autem exigit virtutes morales”, also 159<sup>va-vb</sup>; Guido Vernani, *Summa moralium* 6.2.3, MS Vatican City, BAV Ross. 162, f. 78<sup>v</sup> (literally quoting Aquinas); Walter Burley, *Expositio super decem libros Ethicorum* 6.5 (Venice, 1481), f. o3<sup>rb-va</sup>; John Buridan, see Gerhard Krieger, *Der Begriff der praktischen Vernunft nach Johannes Buridanus* (Münster, 1986), esp. 52 ff., 96 ff.; John of Legnano, *De pace*, MS Vatican City, BAV Vat. lat. 2639, f. 178<sup>vb</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> John Dedecus, *Questiones in Ethica* 3.5, MS Oxford, Balliol 117, f. 227<sup>ra</sup>: “Virtutes medie possunt dici virtutes perficientes intellectum practicum. Sed intellectus practicus ... circa agibilia... hunc perficit prudentia”.

<sup>32</sup> Henry of Friemar, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 2.5, f. 49<sup>vb</sup>: “virtutum moralium quedam est aliarum regula et mensura, puta prudentia, quedam autem sunt regulate et mensurate, puta iusticia, fortitudo, temperantia”. Friemar's commentary survives in 21 MSS; see LINES, *Aristotle's Ethics*, 466–467.

<sup>33</sup> John Buridan, [*Questiones*] *super libros Ethicorum* 6 q. 9 (Paris, 1513; repr. Frankfurt

in his commentary Buridan cites the view of Eustratius that the four principal moral virtues—*quattuor principales virtutes morales, scilicet prudentia, temperantia, fortitudo et iustitia*—correspond to four bodily qualities. In fact, Eustratius does not speak of four moral virtues in this context, only of four general virtues.<sup>34</sup> Buridan's misquotation reveals his tendency to consider the four cardinal virtues as the central concepts of morality, in accordance with medieval tradition before the rediscovery of Aristotelian ethics.

The view of Albert and Aquinas that justice, fortitude, and temperance are the principal moral virtues in their specific Aristotelian conception initially met with equally little enthusiasm. To be sure, Aquinas had his supporters. John of Tytynsale († ca. 1289) and Henry of Friemar confirm the view that the four cardinal virtues in their Aristotelian sense concern the principal actions of morality, while the secondary virtues relate to actions of lesser importance.<sup>35</sup> The arguments

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am Main, 1968), f. 125<sup>va</sup>: prudence “concedi potest moralis secundum connexionem, quia moralibus necessario connexa; potest etiam concedi moralis directiue, quia dirigit omnes virtutes morales in suis operationibus”. Buridan's commentary survives in over 100 MSS and several printed editions; see Lines, *Aristotle's Ethics*, 470–471.

<sup>34</sup> See *ibid.* 1 q. 9, f. 8<sup>va</sup>; Eustratius of Nicea, *In Ethicam nicomacheam* 1.2, in *The Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle in the Latin Translation of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln († 1253)*, I: *Eustratius on Book I and The Anonymous Scholia on Books II, III and IV*, ed. H. Paul F. Mercken (Leiden, 1973), 35 (see also above, n. 12); the same parallel also at 6.13, MS Oxford, All Souls 84, f. 145<sup>ra</sup>. Prudence corresponds to *sensuum vivacitas*, temperance to *pulchritudo*, fortitude to *robur*, justice to *sanitas*.

<sup>35</sup> John of Tytynsale, *Questiones super libros Ethicorum* 2 q. 15, MS Durham, Cathedral Library C.IV.20, f. 222<sup>ra-1b</sup>: “secundum istos quatuor sunt uirtutes cardinales, scilicet prudentia ad quam pertinet rectitudo rationis et iusticia ad quam pertinet equalitas operacionis, fortitudo ad quam pertinet animi confirmacio et temperancia ad quam pertinet passionum repressio, unde secundum aliquos iste virtutes sunt generales ad quas alie reducuntur sicut species ad genera, sed illud non uidetur esse verum, nam quod requiritur ad omnem uirtutem non distinguit... Preterea non omnis rectitudo pertinet ad prudentiam sed circa actum qui est precipere, nec omnis equalitas pertinet ad iusticiam sed equalitas que est ad alterum, nec omnis firmitas animi ad fortitudinem sed firmitas animi in periculo mortis, nec omnis repressio ad temperanciam sed sola que est circa tactum. Non igitur possunt iste uirtutes dici generales ita quod sunt genera aliarum. Dici tamen possunt generales quia sunt principales, quia sunt circa acta principalia, alie uero sunt secundarie quia sunt circa acta minus principalia”. Tytynsale's commentary also survives in MSS Cambridge, Gonville and Caius 611/341, ff. 146<sup>ra</sup>–181<sup>vb</sup>, and Oxford, Oriel 33, ff. 339<sup>ra</sup>–382<sup>ra</sup>. It covers only the first four books of the *Ethics* in the Durham and Cambridge MSS; the Oxford MS continues with Book 5 (ff. 371<sup>ra</sup>–375<sup>va</sup>, fragmentary) and 10 (ff. 377<sup>ra</sup>–382<sup>ra</sup>). Henry of Friemar, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 2.5, f. 52<sup>va-vb</sup>: the *modi generales* of the virtues (see below, n. 39) do not permit one to distinguish between the virtues; moreover, “non est verum quod omnis rectitudo rationis pertineat ad prudentiam, ut patebit in 60, sed solum illa que



of both coincide almost exactly with those offered by Aquinas, but diverge from his commentary on two significant points. First, neither Tytynsale nor Friemar repeats Aquinas's idea that the secondary virtues can be reduced to the principal ones,<sup>36</sup> though Friemar presents them as annexed to fortitude and temperance, an idea voiced by Aquinas only in his theological works (Friemar's source is actually Giles of Rome).<sup>37</sup> The idea of a hierarchy of cardinal and secondary virtues is consequently less strong in their commentaries than in the work of Aquinas. Second, Tytynsale and Friemar are more radical than Aquinas in rejecting the concept of general cardinal virtues. In Tytynsale's view, prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance are not appropriately called virtues in their general sense, but rather concern four aspects or *modi* of all specific virtues.<sup>38</sup> Likewise, Friemar speaks of cardinal or principal "virtues" only when referring to them in their specific sense; in their general sense, prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance are not virtues but *modi generales* of the virtues.<sup>39</sup> The term *modus* does not occur in this context in Aquinas's work.

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est specialiter secundum actum rationis qui est precipere; nec [est *add. MS*] omnis equalitas actionum pertinet ad iusticiam, sed solum illa que est ad alterum, nec omnis firmitas animi ad fortitudinem, sed illa que est in periculis mortis, nec omnis repressio passionum ad temperantiam, sed solum repressio earum que pertinent ad delectabilia tactus, ex quo sequitur quod iste virtutes non dicuntur principales eo quod sunt generales quarum ratio participetur ab aliis virtutibus, ut uolebant predicti, sed dicuntur principales respectu aliarum propter principalitatem materie circa quem versantur; alie vero dicuntur secundarie quia sunt circa minus principalia obiecta".

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 2.8, p. 103: "Alie vero virtutes... possunt reduci ad praedictas, non sicut species ad genera, sed sicut secundariae ad principales".

<sup>37</sup> See Henry of Friemar, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 3.9 and 3.13, ff. 76<sup>vb</sup>–77<sup>ra</sup>, 83<sup>va</sup>–<sup>vb</sup> (*virtutes annexae, virtutes adiunctae*); Friemar states that fortitude and temperance concern the foremost objects of the irascible and concupiscent appetite, respectively. For his classification of the virtues (copied from Giles of Rome, *De regimine principum* 1.2.3, pp. 51–56), see *ibid.* 2.5, f. 53<sup>ra</sup>.

<sup>38</sup> See John of Tytynsale, *Questiones super libros Ethicorum* 3 q. 33, f. 236<sup>va</sup>–<sup>vb</sup>: fortitude can be understood "uno modo secundum quod imperat firmitatem animi absolute et sic est quedam virtus generalis uel magis communicatio uirtutis quia ad quamlibet uirtutem pertinet", and as a special virtue as defined by Aristotle. The same is true for temperance, see *ibid.* 3 q. 45, f. 240<sup>va</sup>: "temperancia secundum significationem nominis virtus generalis est uel modus cuiuslibet uirtutis, quia in qualibet uirtute oportet quod temperat illud circa quod est. Sed sicut fortitudo precipue est circa timores malorum maximorum ut circa pericula mortis, ita temperancia precipue est circa illa que maxime indigent temperacionem, et tales sunt delectaciones".

<sup>39</sup> See Henry of Friemar, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 2.5, f. 52<sup>va</sup>: "quidam ponunt virtutes istas distingui secundum quosdam modos generales uirtutum qui sunt 4... secundum istos 4or modos generales seneca et tullius et quidam aliorum ponebant istas virtutes

Walter Burley (†1344/45) lends only partial support to Aquinas's view. Taking Friemar's exposition on the cardinal virtues as his point of departure, Burley declares both the Stoic and the Thomistic views correct. On the one hand (following Cicero and Seneca), the cardinal virtues are genera which comprise the other moral virtues as their species; on the other hand (following Aristotle), they are species related to the principal acts of morality. In the first sense, the four virtues are justly called cardinal.<sup>40</sup> Burley is the only commentator of our period to accept the traditional concept of the cardinal virtues as genera. His source of inspiration must have been Grosseteste's *Notule* to the *Nicomachean Ethics*, a text Burley uses extensively in his commentary,<sup>41</sup> even though his classification of the Aristotelian moral virtues under the cardinal virtues goes back to Giles of Rome.<sup>42</sup> Burley's classification recurs in the commentary of John Dedecus.<sup>43</sup>

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distingui, ponentes omnem rectitudinem rationis ad prudentiam pertinere, ad iusticiam omnem equalitatem operacionum, ad fortitudinem omnem animi firmitatem, ad temperantiam uero omnem passionum refrenacionem".

<sup>40</sup> See Walter Burley, *Expositio* 2.7, f. f8<sup>rb</sup>: "Videtur tamen mihi quod opinio Seneca et Tullii possit probabiliter sustineri, scilicet quod virtutes cardinales sunt genera subalterna continentia sub se virtutes speciales... Vel potest dici quod ille quattuor virtutes que dicuntur cardinales vno modo sunt species, scilicet ut sunt circa determinatam materiam, et alio modo sunt genera subalterna vt dictum est, et sic proprie dicuntur cardinales". Burley's commentary survives in 26 known MSS and three printed editions; see Lines, *Aristotle's Ethics*, 468–469.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. *ibid.* 3.13, ff. k5<sup>vb</sup>–k6<sup>ra</sup>, where Burley follows the opinion of Grosseteste (see above, n. 13) that temperance *proprie dicta* is Aristotelian temperance, while temperance *communiter dicta* relates to all five senses. Even temperance *proprie dicta* is, like the other cardinal virtues, a genus which comprises several species or *modi*, viz., *abstinentia*, *parcimoniam*, *sobrietatem*, *castitatem*, and *pudicitiam* (see *ibid.* f. k6<sup>va</sup>–<sup>vb</sup>). Cf. *ibid.* 4.3, f. l8<sup>rb</sup>, on liberality as a secondary virtue annexed to, and reducible to, temperance.

<sup>42</sup> See *ibid.* 2.7, ff. f7<sup>vb</sup>–f8<sup>rb</sup>: prudence resides in reason, justice in the will, four virtues *in irascibili* (fortitude, magnanimity, magnificence, meekness), six *in concupiscibili* (temperance, liberality, *honoris amativa*, truthfulness, sociability, cheerfulness). Burley may have known this classification through Henry of Friemar; cf. above, n. 37.

<sup>43</sup> John Dedecus, *Questiones in Ethica* 3.5, f. 227<sup>rb</sup> (after introducing a division similar to Burley's as quoted in the previous note): "Et est notandum quod predictarum virtutum quatuor sunt cardinales siue principales propter hoc quod 4or potencias principales anime perficiunt. In intellectu practico principalis est prudentia, in voluntate est iusticia, in irascibili est fortitudo principalis et in concupiscentia est temperancia principalis. Per prudentiam habet homo rationes, per iusticiam operationes adequatas, per fortitudinem confirmatam et per temperanciam passionum refrenacionem". For a discussion of the work of Dedecus and Burley's influence on it, see J.P.H. Clark, "John Dedecus: Was He a Cambridge Franciscan?", *Archivum franciscanum historicum* 80 (1987), 1–38. Clark lists 5 MSS and one early edition; a sixth MS is mentioned by Lines, *Aristotle's Ethics*, 169 n. 63.

Other commentators distanced themselves from Aquinas's conception of the cardinal virtues for opposite reasons. The late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century commentators once known as Averroist reject the general cardinal virtues in much the same way that Tytynsale and Friemar do.<sup>44</sup> In fact, none of these commentators discusses the scheme of the cardinal virtues as such. Still, Radulphus Brito (†1320) takes the notion of general fortitude into account in his discussion of that virtue. Radulphus explains that *fortitudo* refers to three different things: first, to physical strength; second, to the constancy and firmness inherent in doing what is good; and, third, to sustaining mortal danger in war, as Aristotle defined it. Only in the third sense is fortitude a moral virtue according to Radulphus; in the second sense, it is no moral virtue itself but only a disposition of the moral virtues, which all require a fixed determination of the mind.<sup>45</sup> A similar argument can be found in three related commentaries.<sup>46</sup> Having discarded the idea of general cardinal virtues, the commentators do not attempt to present fortitude, temperance, and justice as principal virtues in their Aristotelian sense, either. They recognize that fortitude and temperance control the strongest human fears and the strongest human desires, respectively, but they do not therefore consider the other moral virtues as secondary, let alone as subordinate. By having their specific objects, fortitude and temperance are different from the other moral virtues, but not superior to them; the other moral virtues cover other specific objects, so that their existence is just as necessary. This line of reasoning effectively put an end to the notion of cardinal virtues: in their general sense, the cardinal virtues are no virtues, while in their specific sense, they are not cardinal. Curiously, most "Averroist" commentators nevertheless accept

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<sup>44</sup> René-Antoine Gauthier, "Trois commentaires 'averroïstes' sur l'Éthique à Nicomaque", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 16 (1947–1948), 187–336, discusses commentaries ascribed to Radulphus Brito, Giles of Orléans, and James of Douai. One may add the commentaries contained in MSS Erlangen, UB 213; Erfurt, SB Amplon. F 13; Paris, BnF lat. 16110. For details, see Iacopo Costa's forthcoming edition of Radulphus Brito's *Questiones in Ethicam*.

<sup>45</sup> Radulphus Brito, *Questiones in Ethicam* 3 q. 75, f. 21<sup>va</sup>: "alio modo dicitur fortitudo pro constantia et firmitate alicuius in bonis operationibus, et sic non est uirtus moralis, ymo est dispositio communis ad omnem uirtutem moralem, quia ad omnes uirtutes morales requiritur perseueranter et constanter operari". Radulphus does not make similar observations on temperance or justice.

<sup>46</sup> See Giles of Orléans, *Questiones in Ethicam* 3 q. 60, MS Paris, BnF lat. 16089, f. 207<sup>vb</sup>; *Questiones in Ethicam* 3 q. 57, MS Erlangen, ff. 57<sup>vb</sup>–58<sup>ra</sup>; *Questiones in Ethicam* 3 q. 53, MS Erfurt, f. 97<sup>ra</sup>. I owe these references to Iacopo Costa.

a view expressed by Aquinas in his theological work: that man's intellectual, irascible, and concupiscible appetites are regulated by justice, fortitude, and temperance, respectively.<sup>47</sup> They do not seem to have realized that this view presupposes the notion of general cardinal virtues. Henry of Friemar shows more caution in this respect, remarking in his commentary that the irascible and concupiscible appetites have too large fields to be covered by only one moral virtue each.<sup>48</sup>

The "Averroists" apparently had some success in making the cardinal virtues irrelevant to the interpretation of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. The scheme of the four virtues is absent from several commentaries on Aristotle's work composed in the early fourteenth century. Much in line with the Averroists, the Carmelite friar Guido Terreni (†1342) denies that fortitude and temperance exist as general virtues, since both have specific objects; only justice exists as a general virtue, or rather coincides with virtue in general, as Aristotle demonstrated. Thus Terreni explicitly rejects the view that all moral virtues can be reduced to fortitude, temperance, and justice.<sup>49</sup> Neither does Terreni give a privileged position to specific fortitude and temperance. In his commentary, fortitude and temperance are just two among many moral virtues in Aris-

<sup>47</sup> See Radulphus Brito, *Questiones in Ethicam* 5 q. 110, f. 29<sup>ra</sup>; Giles of Orléans, *Questiones in Ethicam* 5 q. 95, f. 214<sup>ra</sup>; *Questiones in Ethicam* 5 q. 93, MS Erlangen, f. 64<sup>vb</sup>; *Questiones in Ethicam* 5 q. 88, MS Erfurt, f. 104<sup>vb</sup>. James of Douai (?), *Questiones in Ethicam* 3 q. 70, MS Paris, BnF lat. 14698, f. 163<sup>va-vb</sup>, and *Questiones in Ethicam* 5 q. 7, MS Paris, BnF lat. 16110, f. 261<sup>ra</sup>, attribute justice to the will without saying that fortitude and temperance control the sensitive appetites. I owe these references to Iacopo Costa.

<sup>48</sup> See Henry of Friemar, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 2.5, f. 51<sup>ra</sup>.

<sup>49</sup> See Guido Terreni, *Quaestiones in libros Ethicorum* 5, MS Paris, BnF lat. 3228, f. 38<sup>va</sup> (= P), checked against MS Bologna, BU 1625, f. 30<sup>va</sup> (= B): "Causam huius assignant aliqui quia omnis uirtus moralis est uel temperantia uel fortitudo uel iusticia, quia omnes [iste *add. B*] alie ad istas ut ad principales reducuntur, ut 2. huius est uisum. Temperantia autem siue fortitudo non potest esse [potest esse *inv. B*] uirtus generalis, nam temperantia et fortitudo sunt respectu particularis boni in appetitu sensitio tamquam in subiecto, sed uirtus generalis cum sit respectu boni uniuersalis apprehensi secundum rationem erit in uoluntate et ideo erit iusticia uirtus generalis et non temperantia uel fortitudo. Sed hoc non ualet, primo quia obiectum cuiuslibet uirtutis est bonum conueniens rationi... Secundo quia, ut uisum est, non solum fortitudo et temperantia sunt in appetitu sensitio quin imo iusticia, ergo propter hoc non debet magis poni [proponi *B*] uirtus generalis quam alie. Et ideo dicendum quod generalis uirtus debet esse iusticia et non alia, nam, ut dictum est, per uirtutem generalem ordinatur aliquis ad alterum... sed ad iusticiam pertinet perficere hominem in ordine ad alterum, fortitudo autem secundum se solum perficit in ordine ad se et temperantia similiter. Ergo uirtus generalis erit iusticia". Terreni refers back to an earlier discussion on the cardinal virtues in his questions on Book 2, but I have been unable to find it there. His commentary also survives in MS Vatican City, BAV Borg. lat. 328.

totle's system.<sup>50</sup> This is even more true of Peter of Corveheda (1336/50) and Guido Vernani († ca. 1345), whose commentaries only rarely bring in topics alien to Aristotle's thought. Like some contemporary commentators, Corveheda broadens the Aristotelian notion of fortitude to include martyrdom along with military courage, but excludes mental strength displayed in other cases from its range,<sup>51</sup> even though he, too, subscribes to the idea that fortitude and temperance control the irascible and the concupiscible appetites.<sup>52</sup> Vernani sticks to a purely Aristotelian division and conception of the virtues; I have found no trace of the idea of cardinal virtues in his work, despite his dependence on Aquinas.<sup>53</sup> Albert of Saxony († 1390), whose commentary largely derives from Burley's, does not refer to the cardinal virtues either.<sup>54</sup> It is evident from these examples that around 1300, the cardinal virtues had lost their credibility for at least some commentators on Aristotle's *Ethics*,<sup>55</sup> despite the tremendous popularity of the scheme in contemporary moral literature.

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<sup>50</sup> In his questions on Book 3, *B* ff. 36<sup>ra</sup>–41<sup>vb</sup> (missing in *P*), Terreni only discusses fortitude and temperance according to their Aristotelian definitions. See esp. f. 39<sup>ra</sup>: temperance only pertains to touch while other virtues regulate other *delectationes* and hence cannot be subsumed under temperance. Cf. Henry of Friemar, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 2.5, f. 49<sup>vb</sup>: the secondary virtues “omnes sunt circa *alias* passiones”; Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 2.8, p. 103: these virtues “omnes sunt circa *aliquas* passiones” (my italics, *IB*). The change of vocabulary might theoretically result from a scribal error; in any case, Friemar does place the secondary virtues under fortitude and temperance.

<sup>51</sup> Peter of Corveheda, *Sententia super librum Ethicorum* 3.8, MS Vatican City, BAV Urb. lat. 222, ff. 241<sup>vb</sup>–242<sup>ra</sup>: “Dico igitur quod principaliter ille est fortis qui non timet mortem cuius est mors pro re publica uel pro fide... scilicet qui non timet ingredi bellum pro re publica uel pro fide”; cf. James of Douai (?), *Questiones in Ethicam* 3 q. 70, f. 163<sup>vb</sup>: fortitude pertains to courage in ordinary war or in “bellum particulare quod pertinet ad personam singularem, ut si aliquis non uellet desistere a iudicio certo propter timorem mortis; illud bellum particulare martirium est” (cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.123.5 with ad 1, *Opera omnia* 10: 12). Corveheda's commentary survives in four known MSS; see Lines, *Aristotle's Ethics*, 476–477 (add Salamanca, BU 2423, ff. 28–57).

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* 3.11, f. 244<sup>ra</sup>–<sup>va</sup>.

<sup>53</sup> Vernani's commentary survives in 14 known MSS; see Lines, *Aristotle's Ethics*, 475–476. I used MS Vatican City, BAV Ross. 162.

<sup>54</sup> For Albert's dependence on Burley, see Georg Heidingsfelder, *Albert von Sachsen: Sein Lebensgang und sein Kommentar zur Nikomachischen Ethik des Aristoteles* (Münster, 1927). I studied Albert's *Expositio libri Ethicorum* in MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Can. misc. 304 (written in 1365); it is in fact a brief chapter-by-chapter summary of Aristotle's thought. For the transmission of the work, see Lines, *Aristotle's Ethics*, 469 (24 MSS).

<sup>55</sup> I also examined Simon of Faversham († 1306), *Conclusiones libri Ethicorum*, MS

What we have seen thus far is that from 1250 onward, the cardinal virtues lost some of their importance even in Thomistic commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics* and gradually disappeared from many others. Seen against this background, the revival of the cardinal virtues in the commentary of Gerald of Odo (1285–1349) is a remarkable phenomenon. Gerald recognizes in his work that the scheme of the cardinal virtues, viewed from Aristotle's perspective, is a heterogeneous list of one intellectual plus three moral virtues. Yet Gerald tries to overcome the inapplicability of the cardinal virtues to Aristotle's system by giving them a new status. According to Gerald, the cardinality of the four virtues does not lie in the fact that all other moral virtues can either be subsumed under them, as tradition had it, or annexed to them, as Albert and Aquinas believe, but in their intrinsic indispensability. The four virtues comprise the essentials of moral goodness in the sense that human beings need them as a minimum to be good, whereas the other moral virtues are accidental in this respect. Moral goodness is inconceivable without prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance, but not without other moral virtues. For example, good people are always just, but not always liberal or magnificent; they would lose their goodness by offending against justice, but not by offending against liberality or magnificence. Had Aristotle considered the question from this standpoint, adds Gerald, he would certainly have accepted the scheme of the cardinal virtues.<sup>56</sup>

Gerald's view comes close to the idea of the cardinal virtues as necessary conditions of virtue, by which it was obviously inspired. He acknowledges, however, that conditions of virtue are not virtues themselves, and therefore defines the cardinal virtues otherwise. Discussing the question of whether fortitude is a cardinal virtue, Gerald claims that fortitude has three different meanings. *Generalissime*, fortitude refers to the firmness inherent in every virtue. In this sense, fortitude is no cardinal virtue but rather a condition of any virtue (*conditio cuiuslibet virtutis*). *Specialissime*, fortitude is restricted to military courage (*fortitudo bellicosa*), in accordance with Aristotle's definition. In this sense, fortitude is no cardinal virtue, either, argues Gerald in flagrant contradic-

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Oxford, Balliol 108, ff. 106<sup>ra</sup>–126<sup>vb</sup>. This writing briefly summarizes the views expressed in each chapter of the *Ethics*.

<sup>56</sup> See Gerald of Odo, *Sententia super libros Ethicorum* 2 q. 21, f. 35<sup>va</sup>–<sup>vb</sup>. Gerald's commentary survives in 17 MSS and two printed editions; see Lines, *Aristotle's Ethics*, 467–468.

tion to Albert and Aquinas, since military courage is not indispensable for moral goodness. After all, the ancient philosophers and the apostles never fought as soldiers, and yet they were better people than contemporaries who engaged in wars. *Mediocriter*, however, fortitude consists in being prepared to withstand evil to the point of death, whether in war or in peace, rather than giving up the good. Only in this sense is fortitude a cardinal virtue, since one cannot be morally good unless one would rather die than surrender to evil.<sup>57</sup> Hence the cardinal virtue of fortitude as redefined by Gerald of Odo is more specific than general fortitude, since it involves the Aristotelian element of enduring mortal danger, but broader than Aristotle's conception of fortitude, since it is not limited to warfare. Thanks to this redefinition, Gerald is able to overcome the dilemma that the cardinal virtues are either too broadly conceived to be virtues or too narrowly defined to count as principal moral concepts.

Unfortunately, Gerald does not redefine the other three cardinal virtues with similar precision as middle grounds between general conditions of virtue and specific Aristotelian virtues. Only in discussing temperance does he consider whether it is a cardinal virtue. Gerald argues that it is, but one cannot infer from his argument that temperance as a cardinal virtue has a larger object than temperance in its Aristotelian sense.<sup>58</sup> However, Gerald introduces in his commentary a classification of the virtues in which he positions the cardinal virtues vis-à-vis some of Aristotle's remaining moral virtues (see Appendix). According to this classification, prudence perfects the intellect while justice, fortitude, and temperance perfect the appetite according to the triple division of the good into *utile*, *delectabile*, and *honestum*.<sup>59</sup> The *utile* can be divided into *dare* and *expendere* on the one hand, to which liberality and magnificence pertain, and *reddere* on the other, which is controlled by justice. Only *reddere* is essential for moral goodness, argues Gerald, for one cannot be good unless one gives everyone his due, whereas one can be good without freely spending one's money. Justice is accordingly a cardinal

<sup>57</sup> Ibid. 4 q. 5, ff. 60<sup>rb</sup>–61<sup>ra</sup>.

<sup>58</sup> See ibid. 4 q. 11 (Aristotelian temperance) and 12 (temperance as a cardinal virtue), ff. 65<sup>va</sup>–66<sup>vb</sup>.

<sup>59</sup> This division of the good, which expands on Aristotle's triple division of the lovable in his discussion of friendship (*Ethica nicomachea* 8.2), already appears in Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 8.3 (700), p. 600, and receives frequent support in the works of Thomas Aquinas; see e.g. *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 1.5, p. 18; *Scriptum in Sententias* II.41.2.2, p. 1044; *Summa theologiae* I 5.6, *Opera omnia* 4: 64–65.

virtue whereas liberality and magnificence are not. The *delectabile* can be divided into giving pleasure, checked by *eutrapelia* and *amicitia*, and receiving pleasure, checked by temperance. Only temperance is a cardinal virtue, since one can be morally good without giving pleasure but not when indulging in excessive pleasure. Finally, the *honestum* concerns either honour or virtue itself. Magnanimity, which relates to honour, is no cardinal virtue, since honour is accidental to moral goodness; fortitude, however, is a cardinal virtue, for one cannot be good unless one prefers virtue to death.<sup>60</sup>

Although Gerald's classification obviously attempts to reconcile the cardinal virtues with Aristotle's system, it disregards some of Aristotle's remaining moral virtues. Moreover, it only partly coincides with another classification given earlier in his work, which follows a different logic, based not on the triple division of the good but on the two sensitive appetites (see the Appendix).<sup>61</sup> This earlier classification equally omits some of Aristotle's virtues but includes many virtues alien to his system, such as humility and virginity. It is not even clear whether temperance, justice, and fortitude figure here as cardinal virtues, although temperance certainly covers a larger field than the sense of touch alone. Both classifications strike one as adaptations of Aristotle's system, even though Gerald declares Aristotle's classification of the moral virtues appropriate.<sup>62</sup> On one point, however, Gerald manifestly breaks with Aristotle. As a consequence of his idea that all non-cardinal virtues are accidental qualities, he maintains that Aristotle's theory of the necessary connection of prudence with the moral virtues applies to the cardinal virtues only. Prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance imply each other's presence, but they can indeed exist without any of the remaining moral virtues.<sup>63</sup>

John Buridan is known to have incorporated many of Gerald's views into his commentary on Aristotle's *Ethics*, albeit not uncritically.<sup>64</sup> This is particularly true of his teaching on the cardinal virtues. Explicitly rejecting Albert the Great's view that the cardinal virtues concern all aspects of human life (*tota humana conversatio*), Buridan supports Gerald's

<sup>60</sup> Gerald of Odo, *Sententia super libros Ethicorum* 4 q. 5, ff. 60<sup>va-vb</sup>.

<sup>61</sup> See *ibid.* 2 q. 22, ff. 35<sup>vb</sup>-36<sup>ra</sup>.

<sup>62</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> See *ibid.* 6 q. 17, ff. 138<sup>ra-va</sup>; see also James J. Walsh, "Buridan on the Connection of the Virtues," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 24 (1986), 458-459.

<sup>64</sup> See James J. Walsh, "Some Relationships Between Gerald of Odo's and John Buridan's Commentaries on Aristotle's *Ethics*," *Franciscan Studies* 35 (1975), 237-275.



idea that they comprise the essence of moral goodness and together make the human being *simpliciter bonus*. The other moral virtues merely relate to the *congruitas* and *decor* of moral goodness, not to its essence.<sup>65</sup> Buridan adds that nobody is morally good without preferring the *bonum honestum* to the *bonum utile* and the *bonum delectabile*. Justice and temperance make humans prefer the *honestum* to the *utile* and the *delectabile*, respectively, while fortitude prevents them from abandoning it and incurring guilt as a result of physical danger.<sup>66</sup>

Unlike Gerald of Odo, Buridan does not distinguish the cardinal virtues from the same four virtues in their specific, Aristotelian sense. Discussing fortitude, Buridan accepts only two meanings of the term: *generaliter sumpta*, fortitude refers to the *firmitas animi* common to every moral virtue, while *specialiter sumpta* it pertains to physical danger in acquiring or retaining virtue, or in avoiding mortal sin. This latter formula obviously goes beyond Aristotle's definition of fortitude as courage in war. Acknowledging this, Buridan explains that 'war' in Aristotle's definition has to be understood not only as military confrontation but also as voluntarily submitting oneself to physical danger for the cause of virtue (much in line with Gerald's fortitude *mediocriter sumpta* and also, surprisingly, with a remark of Walter Burley on the subject).<sup>67</sup> As examples of fortitude related to war in the second sense Buridan mentions not only martyrs but also women who suffer injuries from their assailants rather than give in to adultery, as well as clerics who endure severe fasting and vigils for religious ends.<sup>68</sup> The other cardinal virtues likewise exist as *proprietates* common to all virtuous acts on the one hand, and as specific virtues on the other.<sup>69</sup> Specific temperance, justice, and prudence do not seem to differ much from Aristotle's conceptions of these virtues. But interestingly enough, Buridan argues that temperance has virginity as its superlative form, in the same way that

<sup>65</sup> See John Buridan, *Super libros Ethicorum* 3 q. 19, ff. 56<sup>rb</sup>, 57<sup>vb</sup>; likewise 4 q. 1 ad 2, f. 70<sup>ra</sup>. For the rejected statement see Albert the Great, *Ethica* 3.2.1, p. 234; cf. Henry of Friemar, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 3.9, f. 77<sup>ra</sup>: "licet 4 virtutes cardinales dicantur principales eo quod in ipsis tanquam in cardiacibus tota conuersacio moralis vite principaliter reuoluitur, ut dicit commentator".

<sup>66</sup> See John Buridan, *Super libros Ethicorum* 3 q. 20, f. 57<sup>rb-va</sup>.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Walter Burley, *Expositio* 3.12, f. k4<sup>rb</sup>: "Et ideo circa pericula mortis in bello est principaliter fortitudo. Potest tamen esse ex consequenti circa pericula cuiuscumque mortis que sustinentur propter bonum virtutis, ut propter confessionem fidei vel propter iustitiam vel propter quamcumque aliam virtutem conseruandam".

<sup>68</sup> John Buridan, *Super libros Ethicorum* 3 q. 20, ff. 57<sup>rb-58<sup>rb</sup></sup>.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.* 3 q. 27, f. 65<sup>ra-rb</sup>.

liberality relates to magnificence, *philotimia* to magnanimity, and ordinary fortitude to courage in war.<sup>70</sup> Buridan uses this argument in order to challenge the doctrine of the connection of the virtues. According to Buridan, the superlative virtues are not necessary for every moral agent: not everyone can preserve his virginity, spend magnificently, claim great honours, or fight in war, even if every truly good person would do so if circumstances required it.<sup>71</sup> Buridan does not conclude, however, that only the cardinal virtues are necessarily interrelated. Elsewhere in his work he accepts the idea that all moral virtues are connected through prudence, at least at their highest level of perfection.<sup>72</sup>

If Buridan goes less far than Gerald of Odo in dissolving the connection of the virtues, he surpasses Gerald in adapting the Aristotelian classification of the virtues.<sup>73</sup> Buridan's classification makes better sense than Gerald's, on which it is obviously modelled, in that it includes all virtues distinguished in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (see the Appendix). Moreover, prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance denote both cardinal and Aristotelian virtues, for these coincide in Buridan's conception; in fact, Buridan extends Aristotle's definitions of the specific cardinal virtues in such a way as to include aspects of morality that are fundamental from a medieval Christian perspective. In my view, Buridan thus provides the most successful attempt in the tradition of medieval commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics* to reconcile the scheme of the cardinal virtues with the Aristotelian system. The weakness of the solution of Albert and Aquinas is that it simply declares the four virtues cardinal in their specific Aristotelian conception, while tradition rather located their cardinal status in their general applicability. The fact that Albert and Aquinas in their theological work refer mostly to the cardinal virtues in their general sense suggests that they were not convinced by their own solution, which moreover found little support among later commentators on the *Ethics*. Only by investing the four virtues with a more general meaning could one plausibly present them as cardinal,

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<sup>70</sup> The idea that liberality relates to magnificence as *philotimia* to magnanimity is found in Aristotle, *Ethica nicomachea* 4.10. Aristotle does not refer here to temperance and fortitude.

<sup>71</sup> John Buridan, *Super libros Ethicorum* 4 q. 7, f. 77<sup>rb-va</sup>. Walsh, "Buridan on the Connection of the Virtues," 461, states that Buridan returned to the full Aristotelian position while rejecting Gerald's treatment. However, Buridan's construction of superlative virtues which not all good persons actually develop seriously detracts from Aristotle's view.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* 6 q. 21, ff. 137<sup>rb</sup>-138<sup>va</sup>.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* 3 q. 19, ff. 56<sup>va</sup>-57<sup>ra</sup>.

although defining them too widely carried the risk of deserting the concept of virtue altogether. Gerald of Odo first developed a more general meaning, but without explaining how the cardinal virtues relate to the Aristotelian virtues with the same names. John Buridan invested the Aristotelian virtues themselves with a more general meaning, broadening their conception sufficiently to be able to view them as essential for moral goodness and hence, following Gerald's logic, as cardinal.

Another remarkable aspect of Buridan's teaching on the cardinal virtues is what I would call its pastoral dimension. Since the cardinal virtues make humans morally good (from a philosophical, not a theological perspective),<sup>74</sup> it is by offending against these virtues that humans become morally bad. In effect, mortal sin consists in violating the cardinal virtues according to Buridan, whereas disrespect of other moral virtues results only in minor vices.<sup>75</sup> The cardinal virtues are therefore essential not only to the philosophical idea of moral goodness, but also to the protection of human beings in their everyday struggle against sin. In order to illustrate this idea, Buridan gives two examples. A woman may be tempted to commit adultery by flattery and wantonness, which are suppressed by temperance; by fear of her suitors, which is checked by fortitude; by promises and gifts, which justice rejects; and by false excuses, which prudence annuls. A man may be tempted to avoid a danger he should confront by fear of death, against which fortitude protects him; by his attachment to bodily pleasure such as the presence of his wife, which temperance helps him to overcome; and, likewise, by promises, gifts, and false excuses.<sup>76</sup> In Aristotle's system, virtue is attained only by the happy few. In Buridan's system, the cardinal virtues are necessary for, and accessible to, every man and woman who aspires to a life of moral uprightness. Aristotle's remaining moral virtues are mere adornments to such a life.

It is probably thanks to John Buridan that the revival of the cardinal virtues in commentaries on Aristotle's *Ethics*, initiated by Gerald of Odo, became a lasting success in the late Middle Ages. Buridan's work was by far the most authoritative and most widely circulating commentary in this period and directly influenced a number of later

<sup>74</sup> See *ibid.*, f. 56<sup>rb</sup>: the cardinal virtues make the human being good "secundum quod de bonitate morali locuti sunt philosophi"; likewise Gerald of Odo, *Sententia super libros Ethicorum* 4 q. 5, f. 60<sup>va</sup>.

<sup>75</sup> See *ibid.*, ff. 56<sup>va</sup>–57<sup>ra</sup>. Gerald of Odo, *Sententia super libros Ethicorum* 4 q. 5, f. 60<sup>va</sup>–61<sup>ra</sup>, occasionally contrasts the cardinal virtues with mortal sin.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* 3 q. 20, f. 57<sup>va</sup>.

commentators, notably at Central European universities,<sup>77</sup> although one of the first to adopt his ideas was the Italian lawyer John of Legnano who composed his *De pace* in 1364.<sup>78</sup> Even some fifteenth-century commentaries and ethical compendia which otherwise do not seem to depend on Buridan evoke the cardinal virtues in a way that suggests some influence.<sup>79</sup> Buridan's teaching may even have had the wider effect of contributing to the secularization of the cardinal virtues in late medieval academic culture. Before Buridan, the cardinal virtues were extensively discussed in theology. After Buridan, they appear to have become less popular among theologians. Marsilius of Inghen, for example, ignored them in his commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sententiae*, while he treated the theological virtues at length.<sup>80</sup> Although one cannot exactly measure Buridan's wider influence, he definitely secured a place for the cardinal virtues within Aristotelian ethics and thus transferred discussion of this quartet from theology to philosophy.

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<sup>77</sup> An early example is Conrad of Worms (Conrad Werner of Steinsberg, †1392), *Questiones Ethicorum librorum* 4 q. 4, MS Munich, UB 2° 568a, f. 46<sup>ra-rb</sup>: the cardinal virtues make the human being *simpliciter bonus*, the opposed vices make him *simpliciter malus*; Buridan's example of the *mulier fortis* resisting adultery is also quoted (likewise at 4 q. 5, f. 49<sup>va</sup>). Conrad does not, however, distinguish general from special fortitude. His commentary covers only Books 1 to 4.

<sup>78</sup> Lines, *Aristotle's Ethics*, ignores the work of John, which apart from the introductory sections has the character of a commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, concentrating on the moral virtues and prudence. John's major (unacknowledged) sources appear to be Buridan's commentary and the *Summa theologiae* of Aquinas. At *De pace*, f. 131<sup>ra-va</sup>, John adopts Buridan's classification of the cardinal and Aristotelian virtues; at ff. 142<sup>vb</sup>–143<sup>va</sup>, he presents Buridan's reasonings on fortitude and the other cardinal virtues in a slightly adapted form.

<sup>79</sup> See e.g. Johannes Versor (Jean Le Tourneur, †1482/90), *Quaestiones super libros Ethicorum Aristotelis* 2.7 (Cologne, 1494; repr. Frankfurt am Main, 1967), ff. 18<sup>vb</sup>–19<sup>rb</sup>: prudence, though actually an intellectual virtue, is included among the moral virtues; 3.9, ff. 26<sup>vb</sup>–27<sup>ra</sup>: fortitude exists in a strict sense (pertaining to war) and in a larger sense (pertaining to any danger which challenges human reason). Versor was a Thomist, but notably his statement on fortitude has more in common with Buridan than with Aquinas. See also *Moralis philosophiae fundamentum compendiosum*, MS Vienna, ÖNB 4291, f. 277<sup>r</sup> (anno 1462): "Diuiditur autem hoc modo uirtus moralis in uirtutes cardinales et non cardinales. Virtutes cardinales sunt 4or scilicet fortitudo, prudentia, temperancia et iusticia" (the *non-cardinales* are Aristotle's remaining virtues) with the corresponding scheme on f. 281<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>80</sup> See Marsilius of Inghen, *Questiones super quattuor libros Sententiarum* (Strasbourg, 1501; repr. Frankfurt am Main, 1966) III qq. 14–15, ff. 447<sup>ra</sup>–472<sup>vb</sup>.

*Appendix: Gerald of Odo's and  
John Buridans' classifications of the moral virtues*

Gerald of Odo introduced two classifications of the moral virtues in his commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*. The first one is based on the idea that the moral virtues, situated in the will, regulate the concupiscible and irascible appetites. It is not clear whether justice, fortitude, and temperance figure as cardinal virtues in this classification, although temperance seems to cover more than the senses of touch and taste alone, as in Aristotle's conception.

- appetitus concupiscibilis
  - circa materiam delectabilem
    - circa receptionem
      - secundum tactum: castitas (species temperantiae)
        - subspecies*: virginitas, castitas, vidualis pudicitia, coniugalitudo
      - secundum gustum: sobrietas (species temperantiae)
        - subspecies*: sobrietas cibi, sobrietas potus
      - secundum auditum: euphilonitia (annexa temperantiae)
      - secundum visum: compositio (annexa temperantiae)
    - circa materiam utilem
      - penes dare et expendere
        - mediocrae expensae: liberalitas
        - magnae expensae: magnificentia
      - penes reddere: iustitia (*and its many species*)
- appetitus irascibilis
  - circa materiam honestam
    - circa bonum arduum et difficile
      - ratione magnitudinis: magnanimitas
        - ratione dilationis: longanimitas (annexa magnanimitati)
      - ratione varietatis accentuum: aequanimitas (annexa magnanimitati)
      - ratione sublimitatis et pronitatis ad casum: humilitas (magnanimitatis conservativa)
    - circa malum
      - imminens
        - potest repelli
          - a causa humana: fortitudo
          - a fortuna: sicurafidentia (attribuitur fortitudini)
        - non potest repelli: tolerantia (attribuitur fortitudini)
      - iam illatum
        - a causa non humana: patientia
        - a causa humana: mansuetudo

Gerald's second classification is based on the triple division of the good into the *utile*, *delectabile*, and *honestum*. Each of these three comprise essential as well as accidental aspects of moral goodness. The essential

aspects are regulated by the cardinal virtues of justice, temperance, and fortitude:

- utile
  - dare, expendere: liberalitas, magnificentia (*accidental*)
  - reddere: iustitia (*cardinal*)
- delectabile
  - largiendo: eutrapelia, amicitia (*accidental*)
  - recipiendo: temperantia (*cardinal*)
- honestum
  - honor: magnanimitas (*accidental*)
  - virtus: fortitudo (*cardinal*)

John Buridan extended Gerald's second scheme in his commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* so as to include all moral and intellectual virtues figuring in Aristotle's work:

- utile
  - consumendo seu distribuendo
    - dando, expendendo: liberalitas, magnificentia
    - reddendo: iustitia
  - aggreduendo seu accipiendo
    - quod suum est: liberalitas, magnificentia
    - quod alterius est: iustitia
  - retinendo seu servando
    - alienum: iustitia
    - suum: liberalitas, magnificentia
- delectabile
  - largiendo: amicitia/affabilitas, eutrapelia
  - recipiendo: temperantia
- tristabile
  - inducens timorem: fortitudo
  - commovens ad iram: mansuetudo
- honestum
  - pertinens ad virtutem cognoscitivam: *five intellectual virtues*
  - pertinens ad virtutem interpretativam: veritas
  - pertinens ad virtutem appetitivum: magnanimitas, philotimia
  - pertinens ad virtutem propter imminens periculum non perdendam sed retinendam: fortitudo



POLITICAL PRUDENCE IN SOME MEDIEVAL  
COMMENTARIES ON THE SIXTH  
BOOK OF THE *NICOMACHEAN ETHICS*

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The modern reader might well be surprised that John Buridan devotes so much of his commentary on the sixth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* to questions about the unity of prudence. One question (q. 13) considers whether there are different prudences, each related to some specific moral virtue. A second question (q. 14) considers whether individual prudence, political prudence, and prudence regulating the household are all the same disposition. A third question (q. 15) examines the relationship between political prudence and legislative prudence, while a fourth (q. 17) concerns the relation between prudence, the moral sciences discussed in Aristotle's *Ethics*, *Economics*, and *Politics*, and those in books of laws and *decreta*. Where Aristotle himself devotes only one short passage to the unity of prudence (*EN* 1041b22–32), four out of Buridan's 22 questions on book 6 deal with a cluster of problems related to this topic.

A likely explanation lies in the tradition of commenting on the *Nicomachean Ethics*,<sup>1</sup> especially at Paris. The few, entangled lines where Aristotle discusses the relationship between prudence and politics caused medieval interpreters so many problems that it became customary for the masters to raise questions at this point of their lectures. As often happens in the history of philosophy, the problems were not solved by so many interventions; on the contrary, questions tended to increase in number and length. The result of such discussions is an interpretation moving farther and farther from what we now recognize as the histori-

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I would like to thank Bonnie Kent and István Bejczy for their most valuable help in finishing the present paper, that is dedicated to my parents.

<sup>1</sup> For an updated survey, see David A. Lines, *Aristotle's Ethics in the Italian Renaissance (ca. 1300–1650): The Universities and the Problem of Moral Education* (Leiden, 2002), esp. 45–91.



cal Aristotle's opinion, until it becomes almost independent. Of course, this does not make these discussions less interesting, at least in the eyes of medievalists.

The aim of this paper is to present some interpretations of the Aristotelian passage that in different ways helped to shape the commentary tradition. I shall focus in particular on the concept of political prudence, using it as a sort of litmus test of the development of the discussion.

### *Aristotle's text*

Let us begin with the passage in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that served as a starting point for our commentators' discussions. According to the *recensio recognita*, the Latin translation that René-Antoine Gauthier thinks was the most popular among thirteenth- and fourteenth-century commentators,<sup>2</sup> the passage reads:

Erit autem quaedam utique et hic architectonica. Est autem et politica et prudentia, idem quidem habitus, esse quidem non idem ipsis. Eius autem que circa civitatem, hec quidem ut architectonica prudentia legis positiva; hec autem ut singularia, commune habet nomen politica; ipsa autem activa et consiliativa. Sententia enim operabilis; quare extrema.

Propter quod civiliter conversari hos solum dicunt. Soli enim operantur isti quemadmodum therotemne.

Videtur autem et prudentia maxime esse que circa ipsum et unum, et habet ipsa commune nomen prudentia. Illarum autem hec quidem yconomia, hec autem legis posicio, hec autem politica; et huius hec quidem consiliativa, hec autem iudicativa.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> René-Antoine Gauthier, "Introduction", in Aristotle, *L'Éthique à Nicomaque*, ed. René-Antoine Gauthier and Jean-Yves Jolif (Louvain-Paris, 1970) 1: 120–131; id., "Praefatio", in Aristotle, *Ethica nicomachea*, ed. René-Antoine Gauthier (Leiden-Brussels, 1972–1974), CCXI–CCXLVII.

<sup>3</sup> Aristotle, *Ethica nicomachea* 6.8 (1141b23–1142a11), trans. Robert Grosseteste (*recensio recognita*), ed. Gauthier, p. 485; cf. also *ibid.*, p. 261 (*recensio pura*). For an English translation see Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. James A.K. Thomson, rev. Hugh Tredennick, intr. Jonathan Barnes (London, 2004), 154–155: "Political science and prudence are the same state of mind, but their essence is not the same. Prudence concerning the state has two aspects: one, which is controlling and directive, is legislative science; the other, which deals with particular circumstances, bears the name that properly belongs to both, that is, political science. This latter is practical and deliberative; for an enactment is a thing that can be done, and the last step (in a deliberative process). That is why only these persons are said to take part in politics, because they are

At first sight, two main problems are at stake. On the one hand, Aristotle tries to explain why and in what sense politics and prudence are from different viewpoints the same and not the same; on the other hand, he discusses the relationship among different kinds of prudence. Grosseteste does not solve the problem by distinguishing between ‘politics’ as ‘political science’—that is, a set of cognitions regarding a certain object (in this case, city-state government)—and ‘prudence’ as a virtuous disposition (*habitus*) of the soul.<sup>4</sup> On the contrary, he translates the Greek as *politica* and embarks with Aristotle on a sort of classification of politics (and prudence too), which is made more complicated by the fact that in this classification two key terms, *prudencia* and *politica*, designate at the same time, broadly speaking, both a concept and one of its subordinate meanings. The classification is divided into two parts. In the first part, Aristotle focuses his attention on prudence concerning the city, distinguishing between a directive aspect, called *legispositiva*, and one dealing with particular matters, called *politica*, although the latter term, in ordinary usage, is also common to both aspects. After an effort to explain a way of speaking that does not include legislators among *politici*, Aristotle offers a more detailed classification encompassing individual, domestic, and political prudence. *Politica* is divided in turn into legislative and political, most probably in the sense already explained in the first classification. The latter is said to have a deliberative and a judicative part. In this passage, the Aristotelian text contains the ambiguous statement that prudence seems (*videtur*) to concern above all (*maxime*) the individual. It is not absolutely certain whether the Stagirite is here expressing his own opinion or merely reporting a common way of thinking and speaking. In the following and concluding lines, which I have not quoted, Aristotle presents and rejects the opinion that politicians cannot be regarded as prudent because a prudent man should confine himself to his own interests.<sup>5</sup>

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the only ones that perform actions, like the artisans in (industry). Prudence is also especially identified with that form of it which is concerned with the self and the individual, and bears the name, prudence, that rightly belongs to all the forms, the others being called domestic, legislative and political science, and the last-named being divided into deliberative and juridical science”.

<sup>4</sup> As happens in the English translation cited in the previous note. Cf. Aristotle, *Nikomachische Ethik*, trans. Eugen Rolfes, rev. Günter Bien (Hamburg, 1985), 139, which translates the concepts with “Staatskunst” and “Klugheit”, respectively; Aristotle, *Etica nicomachea*, trans. Marcello Zanatta (Milano, 1986), 607, speaks of “politica” and “saggezza”; likewise Aristotle, *Etica nicomachea*, trans. Carlo Natali (Bari, 1999), 239.

<sup>5</sup> I focussed my attention on this last part in “Individuelle und politische Klugheit

*Conflicting interpretations: Eustratius and Albert the Great*

It is not surprising that medieval commentators had difficulties in interpreting these passages, and in particular in understanding what Aristotle meant by claiming that politics and prudence are at the same time identical and different. Henry of Friemar was well aware of the resulting disagreement among interpreters. In his commentary he wrote *haec littera a diversis diversimode exponitur*<sup>6</sup> while John Buridan, some decades later, echoed this position, stressing that *diversimode autem opinantes hanc auctoritatem diversimode exponunt*.<sup>7</sup>

Medieval commentators on book 6 of the *Nicomachean Ethics* could often find some help in Eustratius's commentary, which Grosseteste had translated together with the Aristotelian text;<sup>8</sup> but as far as this passage is concerned, the Greek bishop seems more interested in offering his own interpretation of the problem than in trying to reconstruct Aristotle's thought. His exegesis of the 'partial' identity of politics and prudence rests on the assumption that *prudentia* concerns first and foremost the individual. He maintains that they are the same in that both fulfill the task of *bene consiliari* and *optimum homini operabilem coniectari*, while they differ because politics concerns the city (*civitas*). According to Eustratius, it is possible to speak of *prudentia* in a general sense, but also, more specifically, of *prudentia politica* and *prudentia moralis*: the latter can be a synonym for *prudentia* without further qualification.<sup>9</sup> In the

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in den mittelalterlichen Ethikkommentaren (von Albert bis Buridan)", in *Individuum und Individualität im Mittelalter*, ed. Jan A. Aertsen and Andreas Speer (Berlin–New York, 1996), 464–478; a revised version of this paper in Italian is published on-line as "Est autem et politica et prudentia, idem quidem habitus: Appunti sul rapporto tra prudentia e politica in alcuni interpreti medievali del VI libro dell'Etica nicomachea (da Alberto Magno a Buridano)", *Etica & Politica / Ethics & Politics* 4 (2002), issue devoted to *Individuo ed universale nelle dottrine morali del medio evo latino*, ed. Guido Alliney and Luciano Cova ([http://www.units.it/~etica/2002\\_2/index.html](http://www.units.it/~etica/2002_2/index.html)).

<sup>6</sup> Henry of Friemar, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 6 q. 14, MS Erlangen, UB 212, f. 153<sup>va</sup>. For the transmission of this commentary see Clemens Stroick, *Heinrich von Friemar: Leben, Werke, philosophisch-theologische Stellung in der Scholastik* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1954), esp. 53–59; Lines, *Aristotle's Ethics*, 466–467.

<sup>7</sup> John Buridan, [*Questiones*] *super libros Ethicorum* 6 q. 14 (Paris, 1513; repr. Frankfurt am Main, 1968), f. 129<sup>va</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> The most complete information on this collection of commentaries is contained in Mercken's introductions to his *The Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle in the Latin Translation of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln (†1253)*, ed. H. Paul F. Mercken (Leiden–Louvain, 1973–). Unfortunately, the commentaries on books 5 and 6 are still unedited. I will use MS Cambridge, Peterhouse 116.

<sup>9</sup> Eustratius, *In sextum Aristotelis moralium*, MS Cambridge, Peterhouse 116, f. 137<sup>ra</sup>:

following lines Eustratius explains that the difference between the two dispositions reflects a difference between the persons who can possess them. On the one hand, thanks to *prudencia*, the citizen (*civis*) reaches the good for himself in political life practicing political virtues, either obeying more prudent people or understanding the reasons for actions that lead to human perfection. On the other hand, *prudencia politica* allows the *politicus* to deal with other citizens and to take care of the whole city. Not surprisingly, Eustratius does not conceive of the sphere of moral prudence as completely separated from political life, but nevertheless understands political prudence as a disposition that not every citizen possesses. Moral prudence and political prudence should therefore be regarded as different dispositions, because they have different *subiecta*.<sup>10</sup> These two dispositions can also be distinguished as a common prudence and a specific one, although the latter is called *prudencia* in ordinary language, and the former, concerning the common good, is called *politica*.<sup>11</sup> Eustratius confirms this interpretation some lines later, commenting on the sentence *videtur autem et prudencia maxime esse que circa ipsum et unum et habet ipsa commune nomen prudencia*, that he understands this as an expression of Aristotle's thought and not as a common opinion he is merely reporting. According to his Greek interpreter, Aristotle is arguing here in favour of the idea that prudence in its proper sense concerns the individual and what is useful for him. If anything, what should be explained is why the Stagirite, while thinking that prudence is a disposition concerning the individual, insists on calling *prudencia* also dispositions concerning politics and the household. Eustratius answers

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“Eadem quidem est politica et prudencia secundum quod utreque habent bene consilium et optimum homini operabilem coniectari secundum ratiocinationem. Quia autem prudencia quidem secundum se ipsam prudentis est et coniectantis sibi ipsi optimum operabilem, politica autem communiter civitati optima coniectatur, propter hoc differunt ad inuicem ratione. Est enim et politica prudencia coniectativa, sed conferencium civitati communiter; non politica autem prudencia, sed moralis, proprie uni optima coniectat”.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.: “Quare ipsa quidem civis prudencia, illa autem politici, quia et civis quidem unus eorum qui in civitate utilium sibi ipsi coniectatius et sibi ipsi soli politicas virtutes dirigere curam faciens, uel obediendo prudencioribus uel discendo et rationes habendo eorum que agit et operatur ducencium ad eam que secundum hominem perfectionem; politicus autem habens quidem et artem qualiter oportet cum civibus conuersari, curam agens autem et communiter omnis civitatis, ut utique in omnibus qui in ipsa dirigatur melius”.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.: “Diuidens prudentiam in specialem et communem et specialem quidem nominans communi nomine, politicam autem communem ut communiter de urbanitate coniectatiam...”.

that such virtuous dispositions concern contingent and useful human actions, just as prudence does, but differ from prudence because their *subiecta* differ according to quantity (a household regards more than one person, politics even more people). According to this interpretation, it is possible to speak of a *prudencia politica*,<sup>12</sup> a concept that does not surface as such in Aristotle's text.

The great scholar Gauthier considered this interpretation of Aristotle's meaning completely wrong ("un contresens");<sup>13</sup> nevertheless, for the first medieval commentators Eustratius was the most authoritative hermeneutic tool to which they had access. This does not imply, however, that they followed him blindly. On the contrary, Albert the Great, in his first commentary on the *Ethics*, alludes to Eustratius's interpretation several times,<sup>14</sup> but chooses a different one. This is evident already at the level of literal exegesis: the more concise literal commentary by Albert ignores Eustratius's explanation of the 'partial' identity between prudence and refers the reader to his own question devoted to the subject. More importantly, Albert interprets the phrase *videtur autem et prudentia maxime esse que circa ipsum et unum et habet ipsa commune nomen prudentia* as the position of *antiqui philosophi* that Aristotle discusses but rejects.<sup>15</sup> Albert's disagreement with Eustratius is evident in his questions. The question beginning *Videtur, quod prudentia et politica sint idem habitus* concludes that they are the same dispositions, differing only according to *modus* or *ratio*, because, Albert says, prudence belongs to reason in its directive function, while politics pertains to the level of execution.<sup>16</sup> In the following question he adds that Aristotle's division of prudence does not proceed according to species, but according to different modes, so that *prudencia* as a common concept does not possess a generic unity, but

<sup>12</sup> See above, n. 9.

<sup>13</sup> See the comments by Gauthier in Aristotle, *L'Éthique à Nicomaque*, p. 498.

<sup>14</sup> See e.g. Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 6.11 (549), ed. Wilhelm Kübel, *Opera omnia* (Münster, 1951–) 14: 472. On Albert's ethical thought, see Jörn Müller, *Natürliche Moral und philosophische Ethik bei Albertus Magnus* (Münster, 2001) and, among the many and interesting contributions of this author, the article published in this volume.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 471: "Primo ponit rationem et dicit, quod *videtur* quibusdam antiquis philosophis, quod *prudencia maxime sit circa unum et proprium bonum...*" (the italics in the edition highlight borrowings from Aristotle's text).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* (544), p. 467: "Dicendum, quod prudentia et politica sunt idem habitus secundum subiectum, sed differunt secundum modum sive secundum rationem, quia prudentia se magis tenet ex parte rationis dirigentis, quia est cum ratione eligibilium, sed politica se magis tenet ex parte operis; est enim quidam habitus eligibilium, prout sunt operabilia".

a unity through analogy.<sup>17</sup> The consequences of this different interpretation of the relation between politics and prudence emerge clearly in the following question, where Albert discusses the view *quod prudentia sit circa ea que sunt communitatis*. In fact, he does not even consider the possibility that *prudentia* could concern exclusively, or even primarily, the individual. Perfect prudence is able to direct actions both on the personal level and on the level of community. Although aware of the fact that there exist persons who seem to possess prudence in only one of these two spheres, the Dominican explains such cases as examples of merely imperfect prudence.<sup>18</sup>

The history of the reception of this Aristotelian passage in the Latin West begins, therefore, with a noticeable disagreement. The Greek commentator suggests that Aristotle here distinguishes between prudence in its most proper sense, as a virtue concerning the individual, and politics, as an aspect of prudence taken in a more general sense, namely the aspect concerned with the good of the community. He also thinks that this latter aspect is specific to a particular group of persons (politicians), while ordinary citizens content themselves with *prudentia*. A ‘political prudence’ does exist and belongs especially to the rulers. In his view, the partial identity between prudence and politics can be interpreted in a weaker way: that is, prudence in its more general sense encompasses more aspects, applied to different subjects of moral life, and one of them is politics. In Albert’s view, on the other hand, prudence and politics regard the same wide spectrum of objects, differing only because the former is more connected to direction and the latter to execution. Albert refrains from considering individual prudence as

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid. (545), p. 468: “Dicendum, quod alia est divisio in species et alia in modos; divisio in species, quando dividitur genus per diversas differentias specificas, divisio autem in modos, quando sunt tantum diversae rationes in participatione unius communis, sicut analogum dividitur. Et talis divisio est hic, quia diversae partes prudentiae, quas assignat, non sunt diversae species nec differentes per substantiam habitus, sed per esse...”.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. (547), pp. 469–470: “Dicendum, quod prudentia, si simpliciter habeatur, dirigit in propriis et in his quae ad communitatem pertinent, quia non est perfecte prudens, qui se et alios regere nescit...; sed secundum quid est prudens, qui tantum scit se habere bene in propriis. Similiter etiam sunt aliqui qui bene se habent in regimine communitatis, sed in propriis nesciunt seipsos regere, et huius ratio est, vel quia contemnunt propria vel quia propriorum rationes sunt magis particulares et homo pluribus periculis subiacet quam civitas, et universale semper facilius est ad sciendum quam particulare. Tamen inter has duas prudentia principalior est illa quae ordinat bene in his quae sunt communitatis, quae est circa divinius bonum. Tamen etiam qui deficit in altero, non attingit optimum, quod est virtutis”.

prudence in its proper sense and rejects the idea of dividing prudence in general into species; on the contrary, he supports the idea that prudence *simpliciter* regards both the affairs of the individual and of the community. In all likelihood, then, it is not by chance that he does not employ the expression *prudentia politica*.

#### *Aquinas's solution*

Eustratius's interpretation was deemed to have greater success in the following years, in part because in his later paraphrasis of the *Nicomachean Ethics* Albert seems to abandon his own former interpretation,<sup>19</sup> but especially because Thomas Aquinas embraces the opinion of the Greek commentator. In fact, Aquinas's *Sententia libri Ethicorum* adopts the distinction between *prudentia* and *politica* put forth by Eustratius: the former is right reason concerning good and evil actions of the individual, while the latter regards what Aquinas calls *multitudo civilis*.<sup>20</sup> He speaks of an identity *secundum substantiam* and of a difference *secundum rationem*, in terms that seem to echo his teacher Albert, but interprets this difference as specific in a technical sense, that is, as a *differentia specifica*.<sup>21</sup> Consistent with this view, Aquinas regards the sentence *videtur autem et prudentia maxime esse que circa ipsum et unum* as expressing Aristotle's own position. As a consequence, prudence applied to the individual retains the common name not only for linguistic reasons (that is, other

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<sup>19</sup> Albert the Great, *Ethica* 6.2.24, *Opera omnia*, ed. Stephanus C.A. Borgnet, 38 vols. (Paris, 1890–1899) 7: 44r: “Sunt autem politica et prudentia idem habitus: esse autem non est idem ipsis. Homo enim homo est et civis; et ideo conferens homini non perfecte confert nisi perfecte conferat et civi: et ideo habitus qui est de conferentibus homini, sub se continet habitum qui est de conferentibus civilitati... prudentia maxime videtur esse circa ea quae sunt homini per se solum existentem conferentia: haec enim est cui nomen prudentiae maxime deputatur. Aliarum autem prudentiarum quae sunt circa conferentia homini, non secundum quod est per se solus, sed secundum quod est domesticus vel civis, alia est denominatio...”. As one can easily see, here Albert does not attribute this claim to “ancient philosophers”, as he had done in his first commentary.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 6.7, *Opera omnia iussu Leonis XIII edita* (Rome, 1882–) 47: 356: “... politica et prudentia sunt idem habitus secundum substantiam, quia utraque est recta ratio rerum agibilium circa humana bona vel mala, sed differunt secundum rationem; nam prudentia est recta ratio agibilium circa unius hominis bona vel mala, id est sui ipsius, politica autem circa bona vel mala totius multitudinis civilis”.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 357: “omnia ergo de quibus hic fit mentio in tantum sunt species prudentiae in quantum...”.

aspects have their own, specific names, such as *yconomia*, *legispositio*, *politica*), but also because prudence *maxime* concerns individual matters.<sup>22</sup> This does not imply, however, that Aquinas ignores the principle that the whole is superior to its parts;<sup>23</sup> he acknowledges that political prudence is ‘more principal’ than prudence concerning the individual or the household and obviously rejects, together with Aristotle, the idea that people who devote themselves to the common good are not properly prudent. Nevertheless, he maintains that *prudencia* in its unqualified sense concerns the individual.<sup>24</sup> The expression *prudencia politica* therefore finds its place in his exposition of Aristotle’s text.<sup>25</sup> In the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* Aquinas also introduces the concept *pars* that had already surfaced in Albert’s commentary. This is reminiscent of works written before the complete translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, which often listed different ‘parts’ of the cardinal virtues.<sup>26</sup>

The treatment of *prudencia* in the *Summa theologiae* exploits in a systematic way the concept of parts of the virtue, allowing for potential, integral, and subjective parts of prudence. Leaving aside potential and integral parts, which would deserve a separate treatment, it is important to notice that Aquinas inserts politics among the subjective parts, explaining that prudence, taken in a general sense, has several species.<sup>27</sup> Their classification follows a principle of binary division: the two main species

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.: “Dicit ergo primo quod, quamvis politica, tam legispositiva quam executiva, sit prudentia, tamen maxime videtur esse prudentia quae est circa unum tantum, scilicet circa se ipsum”.

<sup>23</sup> Important studies of the problematic relationship between the individual good and the common good in late medieval political thought are Matthew S. Kempshall, “The Individual Good in Late Medieval Scholastic Political Thought—Nicomachean Ethics I.2 and IX.8”, in *Individuum und Individualität im Mittelalter*, 493–510; id., *The Common Good in Late Medieval Political Thought* (Oxford, 1999).

<sup>24</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 6.7, p. 357: “Est etiam considerandum quod, quia totum principalius est parte et per consequens civitas quam domus et domus quam unus homo, oportet quod prudentia politica sit principalior quam yconomica et haec quam illa quae est sui ipsius directiva”.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.: “... quaedam vero est politica, id est prudentia exsequendi leges”.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.: “aliae partes prudentiae”. Cf. Odon Lottin, *Psychologie et morale aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles* (Louvain–Gembloux, 1942–1960) 3: 255–278. I focussed my attention on such issues from the point of view of the sources of *De regimine principum* in my “Tra etica e politica: La *prudencia* del principe nel *De regimine* di Egidio Romano”, *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 3 (1992), esp. 109–126.

<sup>27</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.47.11, *Opera omnia* 8: 359: “Unde necesse est quod et prudentiae differant specie secundum differentiam horum finium: ut scilicet una sit prudentia simpliciter dicta, quae ordinatur ad bonum proprium; alia autem oeconomica, quae ordinatur ad bonum commune domus vel familiae; et tertia politica, quae ordinatur ad bonum commune civitatis vel regni”.



differ because one concerns the individual, while the other regards a multitude; such a multitude can be gathered for a purpose limited in time, such as an army, or for a purpose that extends to a lifetime. If the second possibility is the case, then one can distinguish between the domestic and the political community. When applied to these different communities, prudence becomes in the first case *prudencia oeconomica*, in the second *prudencia politica*. The latter, in turn, can be *regnativa*, i.e., directive and peculiar to the ruler, or *politica simpliciter*, the kind of political prudence which is peculiar to subjects.<sup>28</sup>

One can easily see that Aquinas follows Eustratius in explaining the main difference between prudence and politics, although he applies the distinction between the virtue of the citizen and the virtue of the politician to a sub-species of *prudencia politica*. In his view, prudence concerning the individual does not denote a virtue belonging to the individual *qua* citizen, as Eustratius seemed to suggest, but rather a virtue of the individual *qua* individual. Thus it not surprising that Aquinas feels the need to discuss whether prudence concerning the individual's good and prudence concerning the common good are the same in species (*Utrum prudencia quae est respectu boni proprii sit eadem specie cum ea quae se extendit ad bonum commune*).<sup>29</sup> His answer—that prudence in its most general sense, but not in its specific sense, is identical with politics<sup>30</sup>—seems to suggest that the connection between these two dispositions of the soul is a loose one. If one also considers the fact that according to Aquinas, the virtue of the 'citizen' is part of *prudencia politica*, then his position seems to come closer to the claim that the virtue of the good man and of the good citizen do not coincide. Aristotle himself in the *Politics* restricts

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid. II.II.48.1, pp. 365–366: "Partes autem subiectivae virtutis dicuntur species eius diversae. Et hoc modo partes prudentiae, secundum quod proprie sumuntur, sunt prudentia per quam aliquis regit seipsum, et prudentia per quam aliquis regit multitudinem, quae differunt specie, ut dictum est, et iterum prudentia quae est multitudinis regitiva dividitur in diversas species secundum diversas species multitudinis. Est autem quaedam multitudo adunata ad aliquod speciale negotium, sicut exercitus congregatur ad pugnandum: cuius regitiva est prudentia militaris. Quaedam vero multitudo est adunata ad totam vitam: sicut multitudo unius domus vel familiae, cuius regitiva est prudentia oeconomica; et multitudo unius civitatis vel regni, cuius quidem directiva est in principe regnativa, in subditis autem politica simpliciter dicta".

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. II.II.47.11, pp. 359–360.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 359: "Ad primum ergo dicendum quod Philosophus non intendit dicere quod politica sit idem secundum substantiam habitus cuilibet prudentiae: sed prudentiae quae ordinatur ad bonum commune. Quae quidem prudentia dicitur secundum communem rationem prudentiae, prout scilicet est quaedam recta ratio agibilium: dicitur autem politica secundum ordinem ad bonum commune".

the validity of this claim to perverse forms of constitution.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, Aquinas seems to draw a distinction in species between the prudence of the ruler and that of the ruled (although both are sub-species of *prudencia politica*, which is in itself a species of the genus *prudencia*).

As mentioned before, Aquinas's interpretation prevailed. It was adopted with some minor modifications by Giles of Rome in his *De regimine principum*, a book that not only claimed to provide princes with a 'mirror' updated to reflect the medieval reception of Aristotle's practical philosophy,<sup>32</sup> but which also served as easier access to the *Nicomachean Ethics* for learned people.<sup>33</sup> In the relevant passages Giles draws inspiration not from the binary division of q. 48, but directly from q. 50 of the *Secunda secundae*,<sup>34</sup> stating plainly that *prudencia* can be divided into five parts: *particularis* (concerning the individual), *oeconomica* (concerning the government of one's family), *regnativa et legum positiva* (concerning the city or the kingdom and necessary in the ruler), *politica sive civilis* (concerning obedience to the laws and to the orders of the ruler), *militaris* (concerning obstacles—such as enemies—that must be removed).<sup>35</sup> As often happens when a doctrine is transmitted to a wider audience, the simplification pushes the doctrine itself to its limits. In the *De regimine principum*, prudence possesses many species that Giles puts on the same level, and *regnativa* differs from *politica* as *oeconomica* does from *militaris*. This implies that there is a species of prudence specifically different from prudence concerning the individual and from the prudence which

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<sup>31</sup> This issue was usually discussed in commentaries on Aristotle; see Christoph Flüeler, *Rezeption und Interpretation der Aristotelischen Politica im späten Mittelalter* (Amsterdam–Philadelphia, 1992), esp. 107, 116, 143, 144, 147, 150, 161. For a recent and interesting discussion of this issue see also Marco Toste, "Virtue and the City: The Virtues of the Ruler and the Citizen in the Medieval Reception of Aristotle's *Politics*", in *Princely Virtues in the Middle Ages, 1200–1500*, ed. István P. Bejczy and Cary J. Nederman (Turnhout, forthcoming). I wish to thank the author who allowed me to read the text before publication.

<sup>32</sup> Roberto Lambertini, "Il filosofo, il principe e la virtù: Note sulla ricezione e l'uso dell'*Etica Nicomachea* nel *De regimine principum* di Egidio Romano", in *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 2 (1991), 239–279; id., "The Prince in the Mirror of Philosophy: About the Use of Aristotle in Giles of Rome's *De regimine principum*", in *Les philosophies morales et politiques au moyen âge / Moral and Political Philosophies in the Middle Ages*, ed. B. Carlos Bazán, Eduardo Andújar, and Léonard G. Sbrocchi (New York etc., 1995), 1522–1534.

<sup>33</sup> See e.g. Charles F. Briggs, *Giles of Rome's De regimine principum: Reading and Writing Politics at Court and University, c. 1275 – c. 1525* (Cambridge, 1999).

<sup>34</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.50, pp. 374–377.

<sup>35</sup> Giles of Rome, *De regimine principum* 3.3.1 (Rome, 1607; repr. Aalen, 1967), 556–558.

regulates the actions of the ruler, namely ‘political prudence’: a consequence that fits perfectly into the absolutistic tendency of the whole work.<sup>36</sup>

Thanks to Giles’s mediating role, Aquinas’s interpretation not only reached a wider public, it also influenced deeply the discussion at the Arts Faculty in Paris in the last decades of the thirteenth century. Question commentaries of the period have been the object of intense study since Grabmann’s times because of their purported ‘Averroism’. Their investigation contributed a lot to our reconstruction of an ethics of the Parisian Arts Masters.<sup>37</sup> Setting aside questions about the broader influence of Aquinas on the Arts masters, we can observe that their approach to problems concerning the relationship between politics and prudence, if not always their solutions, is much indebted to Aquinas’s last works. The question at stake is whether the different species of *prudentia* constitute a unity or not, and the title of the question sometimes even reproduces the wording in the *Summa theologiae*. This is the case, e. g., for the commentary transmitted by MS Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek 213, containing the question *utrum eadem sit prudentia que est respectu boni proprii et que respectu boni alieni sive communis boni*, which solves the problem by adopting Aquinas’s solution.<sup>38</sup> The

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<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 557: “Quarta species prudentiae dicitur esse politica siue ciuilis. Nam sicut in principante requiritur excellens prudentia qua sciat alios regere, sic in quolibet ciue requiritur prudentia aliqualis qua noscat adimplere leges et mandata principantis ... Differt autem haec prudentia a prudentia particulari, quam collocauimus in prima specie. Nam aliud est quod sciat se regere ut est aliquid in se, et aliud ut est subiectus principis”.

<sup>37</sup> To mention only some recent contributions: Georg Wieland, “The Perfection of Man: On the Cause, Mutability, and Permanence of Human Happiness in 13th Century Commentaries on the *Ethica nicomachea* (EN)”, in *Il commento filosofico nell’Occidente latino (secoli XIII–XV)*, ed. Gianfranco Fioravanti, Claudio Leonardi, and Stefano Perfetti (Turnhout, 2002), 359–377; Luca Bianchi, “Felicità intellettuale, ascetismo e arabismo: Nota sul *De summo bono* di Boezio di Dacia”, in *Le felicità nel medioevo*, ed. Maria Bettetini and Francesco D. Paparella (Louvain-la-Neuve, 2005), 13–34; Iacopo Costa, “La dottrina della felicità nel ‘Commento del Vaticano’ all’*Ethica nicomachea*”, *ibid.* 325–353; *id.*, “Il commento all’*Ethica nicomachea* di Radulfo Brito: Edizione critica del testo con uno studio critico, storico e dottrinale” (Ph.D. diss. Università degli Studi di Salerno/Université de Paris IV-Sorbonne, 2007). See also Costa’s contribution to this volume.

<sup>38</sup> *Questiones in Ethicam*, MS Erlangen, UB 213, f. 70<sup>rb</sup>: “Dicendum quod prudentie communiter acceptae diuersae sunt species quarum una dicitur appropriato nomine prudentia, alia yconomica et ⟨alia⟩ politica et illius politice alia est regnatiua siue legispositiua et alia appropriato nomine dicitur politica. Diuersitas autem istorum habituum sic patet, quia diuersitas habituum accipitur a diuersitate actuum seu obiectorum, non secundum quamcumque diuersificationem obiectorum, sed secundum formalem,

commentary attributed to Radulphus Brito raises the question *Utrum prudentia et politica sint idem* and answers that this virtue in its general sense is divided into different species.<sup>39</sup> Only Giles of Orléans prefers a solution closer to Albert's, stating that the unity of prudence should be explained in terms of analogy, not in terms of genus.<sup>40</sup>

*Henry of Friemar and the critical reaction to Aquinas's solution*

As I have shown elsewhere,<sup>41</sup> disputed and quodlibetal questions from the end of the thirteenth century and the first decades of fourteenth bear witness to a certain unease towards the solution championed by Aquinas. While most authors adopt the idea of a distinction between different prudences, and coherently make use of the concept of *prudentia politica*, they have trouble accepting that such 'sub-prudences' should be distinguished as 'species', in part because this seems to imply that one of such species can exist without another. Among the critical reactions,

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inquantum sunt obiecta, ut dicitur secundo De anima. Modo obiecta istorum habituum specie distinguuntur, ergo et ipsi habitus quia obiectum istorum habituum... est bonum humanum; modo aliud est bonum unius hominis et aliud familie et aliud ciuitatis; in diuersis enim ista bona consistunt et ideo obiecta istorum specie differunt formaliter, ideo et habitus. Unde prudentia est habitus uel recta ratio quo quis bene consiliatur de bonis suis(?)...".

<sup>39</sup> Radulphus Brito, *Questiones in Ethicam*, MS Vatican City, BAV Vat. lat. 832, f. 36<sup>ra</sup>: "Dico ad questionem quod prudentia accipitur in communi uel proprie et stricte; si accipiat in communi sic sunt eius tres partes, scilicet monastica, yconomica et politica. Si accipiat proprie et stricte sic distincta est a politica et yconomica, cuius ratio est quod illi habitus sunt distincti quorum sunt distincta obiecta. Sed monostice, cui appropriatur nomen prudencie, et yconomice et politice sunt diuersa obiecta, quia obiectum monostice est bonum unius secundum se et prudentia monostica est recta ratio in operationibus unius hominis..."; for the attribution to Radulphus, see now Iacopo Costa, "Il commento all'*Etica nicomachea* di Radulfo Brito". For similar texts in related commentaries see René-Antoine Gauthier, "Trois commentaires 'averroistes' sur l'Éthique à Nicomaque", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 16 (1947–1948), 189–213.

<sup>40</sup> Giles of Orléans, *Questiones in Ethicam*, MS Paris, BnF lat. 16089, f. 221<sup>rb</sup>: "Unde notandum quod prudentia non est una secundum speciem et formam sed secundum analogiam et proportionem; est enim una sicut scientia; dicitur autem una scientia non quia sit unius obiecti secundum speciem et formam, sed quia est unius obiecti secundum attributionem sicut patet de prima philosophia que considerat ens secundum quod ens quod non est unum nisi secundum analogiam et sicut dicitur scientia una ita et prudentia dicitur una; bonum autem hominis scilicet secundum quod est pars ciuitatis ordinatur ad unum sicut ad ultimam hominis felicitatem".

<sup>41</sup> Roberto Lambertini, "Political Quodlibeta", in *Theological Quodlibeta in the Middle Ages: The Thirteenth Century*, ed. Christopher Schabel (Leiden, 2006), 441–444.

Godfrey of Fontaines's disputed question, *Utrum prudentia sit una*, was especially influential.<sup>42</sup>

Commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics* are also involved in this development. Henry of Friemar's work, which includes both literal commentary and questions, is a telling example. The Augustinian friar seems so eager to address the problem that he even anticipates the discussion with respect to Albert or Aquinas. As already indicated, the issue was clearly related to the text contained in chapter 6.6 of the *Ethics* (according to the division of the revised version of the *Liber Ethicorum*). In the preceding chapter, however, claiming that the virtue of *sapientia* occupies the highest position among the intellectual virtues, Aristotle had rejected its identification with prudence and with politics, claiming that in this case there would be more than one *sapientia*.<sup>43</sup> For a master aware of debates about the unity of prudence, this passage (which seems to imply that there are many 'prudences') provides a good opportunity to raise the issue and discuss it; so Henry inserts here a long and detailed *quaestio* bearing the title *utrum prudentia que dirigit bonum unius sit eadem specie cum ea que dirigit bonum yconomicum uel civile*. He feels it necessary to prove at the outset that *prudentia* concerning the individual good, called here *prudentia monastica*, is in itself one. The need to restate the unity of the prudence with respect to the various aspects of individual moral life could also be related to the tendency, discussed and rejected in authors such as Godfrey of Fontaines, to think that each moral virtue can possess its own prudence.<sup>44</sup> After dismissing the idea that there can exist a specific prudence for each virtue, Henry is

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<sup>42</sup> Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quaestiones ordinariae* 3, in *Le quodlibet XV et trois questions ordinaires de Godefroid de Fontaines*, ed. Odon Lottin (Louvain, 1937), 119–138. On Godfrey's political thought see Kempshall, *The Common Good*, 204–263; on prudence in particular: *ibid.*, 234, 257.

<sup>43</sup> Aristotle, *Ethica nicomachea* 6.6 (1141a25–31), trans. Robert Grosseteste (*recensio recognita*), p. 484: "Circa se ipsum enim singula quidem bene speculans diceretur utique esse prudens et huic concederent ipsa. Propter quod et bestiarum quasdam prudentes aiunt esse quecumque circa ipsarum vitam videntur potenciam habere provisivam. Manifestum autem utique erit quoniam non utique erit sapiencia et politica eadem. Si enim eam que circa utilia ipsis dicunt sapienciam, multe erunt sapiencie".

<sup>44</sup> See Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quaestiones ordinariae* 3, pp. 129–132 (suggesting that in a certain sense each moral virtue can have its own prudence but arguing that all these different prudences are unified); for the context see Odon Lottin, *Psychologie et morale* 4: 548–663; for Scotus's position see Stephen D. Dumont, "The Necessary Connection of Moral Virtue to Prudence According to John Duns Scotus—Revisited", *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 50 (1988), 184–206; Bonnie Kent, *Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington, 1995), esp. 193–195.

confronted with the problem of the identity of *monastica*, *yconomica*, and *civilis*. It is not surprising that he presents *contrarie opiniones* on this issue.<sup>45</sup> The first asserts that the aforementioned virtues differ by species, while the second claims exactly the opposite, that is, that they are specifically identical. Both opinions, according to Henry, allow for doubts. For example, a distinction by species seem to imply that the related moral virtues also differ, so that the temperance exercised by a man who runs the political community would be different from the temperance that regulates the actions of the head of a household. Henry finds this consequence contrary to experience.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, recalling an argument put forward by Godfrey of Fontaines,<sup>47</sup> Henry remarks that such a distinction between ‘prudences’ different by species implies that the new leader of a political community cannot have the prudence that a leader should, because virtue is acquired through experience, and nobody can have experience in ruling others before being in charge.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Henry of Friemar, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 6 q. 14, f. 151<sup>rb</sup>: “Secundo restat inquirendum utrum ista prudentia sit eadem specie cum prudentia yconomica uel etiam ciuili, circa quod sunt contrarie opiniones. Quidam enim dicunt quod iste prudentie differunt specie... Alii autem econtrario dicunt quod prudentia in hiis tribus est eiusdem speciei”.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 151<sup>va</sup>: “Utraque autem istarum opinionum uidetur dubitabilis. Si enim dicatur secundum primam opinionem quod iste prudentie differant specie, cum quelibet virtus formam et rationem virtutis habeat a prudentia, oportet necessario quod virtutes morales secundum diuersitatem istarum specie differrent. Et ulterius cum quelibet virtus moralis connectatur prudentie ut infra declarabitur, oporteret secundo iuxta diuersitatem prudentiarum (con)nectentium dare tres species virtutum moralium. Quod etiam rationi et experientie contradicit. Experitur enim quilibet in se ipso quod si (de) vita monastica transferatur ad communitatem domesticam uel ciuilem, uel etiam de statu subiectionis ad statum presidentie et gubernacionis, quod easdem virtutes exercet quas et prius”.

<sup>47</sup> Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quaestiones ordinariae* 3, p. 136: “Si autem loquamur de subdito qui non est subditus sic propter suam indigentiam, sed propter convenientem ordinem reipublicae quod unus principaliter multis principetur, propter quod contingit quod subditus potest esse aequalis in prudentia et virtute cum principe, et talis secundum veritatem non est subditus, sed secundum legem, sed debet dici bonus vir, sic est dicendum quod non differunt realiter sive secundum magis et minus, sed solum ratione sive ex habitudine et ordine ad aliud... Constat enim quod, cum aliquis bonus vir princeps fit, nulla fit mutatio realis circa eius prudentiam vel virtutem sed in quantum ex electione vel institutione principis consequitur auctoritatem et potestatem super alios, potest uti sua prudentia et virtute aliter quam bonus vir, sicut patet in habente scientiam perfecte absque auctoritate docendi et in habente cum scientia huiusmodi auctoritatem”.

<sup>48</sup> Henry of Friemar, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 6 q. 14, f. 151<sup>va</sup>: “Preterea, si status presidentie requireret virtutes morales speciei differentes ab habitus in statu subiectionis, tunc cum aliquis statum regiminis assumeret aut virtutes illi statui debitas non

Although persuaded that the second opinion is ‘more probable’, Henry admits that there are strong arguments in favour of the opposing view. In particular, he is well aware of the fact that Eustratius seems to have shared it.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, in order to avoid contradicting such an authority, Henry embarks on an interpretation of Eustratius according to which the ends pursued by the individual, by the head of the household, and by the politician are coordinated and not different enough to justify, properly speaking, a difference in species. According to the Augustinian master, Eustratius must therefore have used the term ‘species’ in a general, not a technical sense.<sup>50</sup> Among ‘prudences’, differences undoubtedly exist, but they concern secondary and instrumental aspects of the exercise of such a virtue.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, Henry is ready to concede that political prudence requires a higher degree of virtue than individual prudence; this amounts to saying, however, that one should at most admit a difference according to perfection, not according to substance. Political, domestic, and individual prudence should therefore be regarded as potential, not subjective parts of prudence taken in its general sense.<sup>52</sup> Concluding his treatment of the issue, Henry is ready to formulate some arguments in favour of the opinion he does not share,

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haberet, eo quod per exercitium nullas virtutes acquirere potuit, aut si detur quod habeat virtutes prius acquisitas, tunc virtutes in statu presidentie et subiectionis secundum speciem differre non possunt”.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.: “... et secundum hoc opinio secunda probabilior uidetur, licet et ipsa dubitabilis sit maxime propter Eustratium qui uidetur sentire quod iste prudentie differant specie”.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., f. 151<sup>v</sup><sup>b</sup>: “Et ideo ad sustinendum tam Eustratium quam etiam opinionem secundam que sine preiudicio mihi uidetur probabilior prima uidetur rationabiliter posse dici quod si considerentur iste prudentie quantum ad eorum formale obiectum et quantum ad finem principaliter intentum a quibus principaliter specificatur iste habitus sic re vera prudentia... est unius speciei... Si uero considerentur quantum ad aliqua obiecta et quantum ad fines non principaliter intentos, sic, cum circa talia obiecta et in ordine ad tales fines iste prudentie secundum diuersas rationes dirigant et precipiant, potest dici quod differant quantum ad diuersam rationem dirigendi et precipiendi, et istam differentiam large et improprie loquens Eustratius appellat differentiam specificam”.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.: “ista sunt quedam extrinseca et secundaria obiecta adminiculantia”. This is most probably an echo of the solution of Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quaestiones ordinariae* 3, p. 134: “... multis indigent adminiculis instrumentis quae non requiruntur ad hoc quod homo se ipsum et in se et in ordine ad alios convenienter dirigat... ideo si prudentia ad illa comparetur, in ipsa diuersitas secundum hoc inuenitur”.

<sup>52</sup> Henry of Friemar, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 6 q. 14, f. 152<sup>ra</sup>: “Et similiter cum Philosophus inferius distinguat diuersas partes uel species prudentie, non intendit loqui de differentia specifica secundum substantiam et speciem habitus, sed solum de diuersitate partium potentialium...”.

although he is not persuaded by them. He does this out of respect for the *maiores* who upheld that opinion and for those who want to follow them.<sup>53</sup> This seems to me an allusion to Aquinas and his followers.

The problem of the unity of prudence surfaces again when Henry comments on the Aristotelian passage on which centers the whole discussion analyzed in this article. As we know, he informs the reader that there are diverging interpretations of the text. In the first place, he describes one possibility, according to which the identity between *prudentia* and *politica* means that politics is identical in substance with the kind of prudence that leads to common good, and differs only *ratione*. The words used to describe this opinion are strongly reminiscent of Aquinas in the *Summa theologiae*, although Henry's rendering does not take in account all aspects of Aquinas's position.<sup>54</sup> Henry judges such a reading of Aristotle untenable because he thinks that it is not true in itself and does not correspond to Aristotle's intention. First, such an interpretation fails to account for the difference between *politica* understood as a science and *prudentia*, which is a virtue. Henry argues in fact that *politica* as a science, such as *monastica*—as he calls it—consists of scientific dispositions (*habitus*) of the soul regarding universal principles, while *prudentia politica* is more concerned with particulars and experience.<sup>55</sup> Second, it is not faithful to Aristotle's intention as it emerges from the context, which is to distinguish between a prudence concerned with the good of the individual, and another one, called *politica*,<sup>56</sup> that

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*: "Rationes prime opinionis solute sunt per iam dicta. Et quia prima opinio magnorum est, ideo, ne precludatur via ipsam sustinere volentibus, respondendum est ad rationes utriusque partis".

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 153<sup>va</sup>: "Quidam dicunt quod non intendit Philosophus quod politica sit idem habitus secundum substantiam cum qualibet prudentia, sed solum cum prudentia que dirigit bonum comune politicum; hec enim prudentia—ut dicunt—est idem habitus substantialiter cum politica, sed differt solum secundum esse et secundum rationem, quia ille habitus dicitur prudentia ut est recta ratio agibilium, sed dicitur politica inquantum ratiocinatur ad bonum commune". Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.47.11, p. 359: "Ad primum ergo dicendum quod Philosophus non intendit dicere quod politica sit idem secundum substantiam habitus cuilibet prudentiae: sed prudentiae quae ordinatur ad bonum commune. Quae quidem prudentia dicitur secundum communem rationem prudentiae, prout scilicet est quaedam recta ratio agibilium: dicitur autem politica secundum ordinem ad bonum commune".

<sup>55</sup> As a matter of fact, this first objection of Henry's seems to be connected to a particular meaning of *prudentia politica*, inspired by the definition of *politica* that Aristotle gives to distinguish it from *legispositiva*. However, he often uses *prudentia politica* in a different, broader meaning.

<sup>56</sup> Henry of Friemar, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 6 q. 14, f. 153<sup>va</sup>: "Sed ista expositio dupliciter uidetur deficere. Primo non uidetur vera in se: politica enim sicut et monas-



leads to the common good. According to Henry's reconstruction, such difficulties gave rise to a different opinion, namely that prudence possesses a generic unity, as Eustratius suggests;<sup>57</sup> but Henry does not share this opinion, either. He thinks that a distinction in different species applies not to virtues proper but only to the *habitus scientifici* regarding a theoretical knowledge concerning good and evil actions. As *habitus scientifici*, *politica* and *yconomica* do differ according to species. Different kinds of prudence differ, on the contrary, only as they pertain to a greater or smaller number of persons.<sup>58</sup> Henry's next question—*utrum legis positiva que in tertio politice dicitur regnativa, politica et yconomica sint partes prudentie*<sup>59</sup>—offers him the opportunity to emphasize the solution already put forward in the preceding discussion: such dispositions of the soul, which are subordinated to prudence, should be considered as potential parts of prudence. This does not exclude the view that politics occupies a higher position on the scale of perfection, because it concerns the common good and—in its legislative aspect—plays the leading role usually proper to the ruler. In this sense, *prudentia politica* is the most perfect potential part of prudence.<sup>60</sup>

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tica importat quendam habitum scientificum quo uniuersales rationes agibilium scientificè speculamur. Constat autem quod talis habitus non possit esse idem substantialiter et realiter cum prudentia politica, tum quia ista est consideratiua agibilium magis principaliter et in particulari et per uiam experimenti, illa uero solum uniuersaliter et scientificè, tum etiam quia multi per doctrinam experimentalem habent prudentiam politicam qui tamen nihil de rationibus agibilium scientificè cognoscunt. Secundo quia non est secundum mentem Philosophi, quia Philosophus hic intendit distinguere notitiam agibilium in prudentiam simpliciter, que tantum dirigit bonum unius, et in politicam que considerat bonum multitudinis”.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.: “Et ideo dicunt alii quod prudentia et politica est idem habitus in genere quia conueniunt in aliqua apparentia quo (*sic pro* a quibus) accipitur communitas generis. Nam secundum Eustratium conueniunt in hoc quod est bene consiliari circa humana bona vel mala sed differunt secundum esse, id est secundum rationem formalem et speculatiuam quia prudentia est bene consiliatiua circa bona conferentia uni tantum, politica autem circa bona conferentia ciuitati et regno et quia hec bona secundum eos differunt secundum rationes eorum formales et specificas, ideo prudentia et politica important habitus substantialiter et specificè differentes”. Strangely enough, Henry does not indicate that this position could also be traced back to Aquinas; the problem would deserve further investigation.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., f. 153<sup>b</sup>: “Et ideo uidetur dicendum consequenter ex dictis quod prudentia et politica sunt quidem idem habitus in genere ut dictum est, sed esse non est idem quia bonum humanum quod in ipsis intenditur multitudine differt et paucitate ut patet ex dictis”.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., f. 154<sup>ra</sup>: “Sed hic forte dubitaret aliquis utrum legispositiva que in tertio politice dicitur regnativa et politica et yconomica sint partes prudentie in communi”.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., f. 154<sup>rb</sup>: “Sed quia prudentia monastica, yconomica et politica proprie

The lengthy and somewhat repetitive treatment in Henry's commentary bears witness to a twofold development. By the beginning of the fourteenth century an interpretation of the *Nicomachean Ethics* prevailed that cannot conceive of prudence in its proper sense as a virtue concerned with the political community, as Aristotle probably intended. Properly speaking, prudence directs the actions of the individual towards his end. Thus it becomes customary to speak of a special kind of prudence, called *prudentia politica*, that is perceived as different from prudence in itself. The discussion concerns how to understand this difference. Many thinkers are unsatisfied with an interpretation that would separate the aspects of prudence from one another, as if they would be in reality different things. They seem to think that in this way one could jeopardize the unity of moral life. The attempt to avoid such a danger is particularly clear in Henry of Friemar, who uses the concept of 'potential part' in order to stress the tight connection among different degrees of prudence. The key role attributed to prudence as an individual virtue is somewhat counterbalanced by emphasizing the pre-eminence of the part of prudence concerned with the common good.

### *John Buridan*

Against this background, many aspects of John Buridan's commentary become more comprehensible. In q. 13 of book 6, *utrum prudentia sit una tantum circa obiecta omnium virtutum moralium*, he takes a stand against the growing tendency to dissolve the unity of prudence.<sup>61</sup> This is even

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loquendo non differunt formaliter et specificè quantum ad formam et speciem habitus qui sumitur ex obiecto formali et primario, sed solum differunt quantum ad modum dirigendi circa quedam secundaria obiecta que proprie diuersitatem specificam inducere non possunt ut patet ex dictis, ideo melius uidetur consequenter dictis tenendum quod isti habitus in quantum inportant habitum prudentie sic diuersimode denominatum et ad diuersos gradus perfectionis contractum sint partes potentiales ipsius prudentie in communi secundum quas quidem partes diuersus modus directionis in prudentia attenditur et etiam diuersus gradus perfectionis in ipsa acquiritur, secundum quod dirigit uel ad bonum humanum principaliter intentum in monastica yconomica et politica uel etiam prout dirigit ad quedam bona secundaria ordinata ad bona principaliter intenta. Utroque enim modo constat quod perfectior directio prudentie requiritur in politico quam in yconomico et in illo adhuc perfectior quam in monastico, quia bonum quanto communius tanto difficilius dirigitur, eo quod ad eius directionem plura consideranda concurrunt".

<sup>61</sup> For discussion of this issue see James J. Walsh, "Buridan on the Connection of the Virtues", *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 24 (1986), 453-482.

more interesting if one takes into account that Gerald of Odo, whose commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* Buridan knew well and used extensively,<sup>62</sup> supported a somewhat different position.<sup>63</sup> It is remarkable that Buridan, as Henry of Friemar before him, defends the unity of prudence against an argument which had been used also to argue in favour of a specific difference between *prudencia monastica* and *prudencia politica*: the difference among their respective objects. Buridan claims that different kinds of actions are all objects of prudence according to one formal *ratio*, which gives them a sort of unity.<sup>64</sup>

Question 14 tackles directly the issue at stake, asking *Utrum prudentia monastica et prudentia ciuilis et prudentia oeconomica sint idem habitus uel diversi*. After remarking that Aristotle confines himself to a puzzling statement (quoted at the beginning of this essay), and noting that the relevant passage is interpreted in different ways, Buridan introduces three opinions, which we have already considered, at least in part. The supporters of the first think that the identity of individual and political prudence (here called *prudencia ciuilis*) should be explained by the fact that both inhere in the same subject, that is, the practical intellect. Their difference is a specific one, so that different ‘prudences’ can be compared to sweetness and whiteness in milk. Others maintain the opposite, namely that prudence possesses a specific identity. When it comes to explaining why prudence and politics differ, although they are the same disposition of the soul, the supporters of this opinion divide into two groups. They all agree that ‘prudences’ are not ‘different things’; some, however, maintain that they nevertheless differ according to species because they possess different *rationes quidditativae*; others think rather that the difference is only accidental. Trying to explain this second position, Buridan says that the very same *habitus*, or even the very same *actus*, can be regarded by extrinsic denomination as belonging to one prudence or to another.<sup>65</sup> Here the modern reader recognizes the influence of the

<sup>62</sup> Id., “Some Relationships between Gerald Odo’s and John Buridan’s Commentaries on Aristotle’s *Ethics*”, *Franciscan Studies* 35 (1975), 237–275.

<sup>63</sup> On Gerald’s ethics, see Bonnie Kent, “Aristotle and the Franciscans: Gerald Odonis’ Commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*” (Ph.D. diss. Columbia University, New York, 1984).

<sup>64</sup> John Buridan, *Super libros Ethicorum* 6 q. 13, f. 129<sup>ra-1b</sup>: “Ad primam dicendum est quod omnia operabilia humana sunt obiecta prudentie secundum unam rationem formalem”.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. 6 q. 14, f. 129<sup>va-vb</sup>. Among many studies devoted to this work, see Gerhard Krieger, *Der Begriff der praktischen Vernunft nach Johannes Buridanus* (Münster, 1986); bibliographical references in Lines, *Aristotle’s Ethics*, 470–471.

great ontological debates of the first half of the fourteenth century, even if it is not easy to identify with precision the supporters of the different positions. For example, the *ratio quidditativa* is strongly reminiscent of the Scotist tradition and, as a matter of fact, this term was used in a parallel passage by Gerald of Odo.<sup>66</sup>

Buridan is well aware that ontological discussions have heavily influenced this conflicting interpretation of Aristotle's theory of prudence, but he is also very critical in this respect, because he finds that such metaphysical subtleties are inappropriate in ethics.<sup>67</sup> He thinks it sufficient to establish that *prudencia monastica*, *oeconomica*, and *politica* are one and the same disposition of the soul, because the common and individual goods coincide. The distinction is possible only *secundum rationem*.<sup>68</sup>

If we keep in mind the foregoing discussion, Buridan's solution is not very original: identity in *esse* and distinction *ratione* is a position that Henry of Friemar already considered and rejected. Much more original is the fact that Buridan inserts his solution into a long discussion claiming that this identity holds only for persons who understand the pre-eminence of spiritual goods in comparison to material goods. Members of the lower class (*vulgus*), says Buridan, are interested only in material goods. For such people, then, individual prudence and prudence directing one towards the common good cannot be identical. On the level of the *bona corporis* and of the *bona exteriora*, individual prudence and political prudence do not necessarily coincide; maybe they necessarily conflict. Concluding this excursus Buridan remarks that the mistake of such a position does not consist in conceiving of prudence as essentially

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<sup>66</sup> Gerald of Odo, *Sententia et expositio cum questionibus... super libros Ethicorum* 6 lectio 9 (Venice, 1500), f. 130<sup>va-vb</sup>: "Et iste tres species sunt idem habitus secundum rem, esse tamen formale earum seu ratio formalis et quidditativa earum non est eadem. Quod patet quia actus earum formales perficiunt distincta formaliter, homo enim et eius subditus et princeps et iconomus sunt distincta formaliter secundum rationes suas, ratio enim hominis est absoluta, alie vero sunt relatiue que nihilominus distinguuntur quia sunt ad diuersos terminos".

<sup>67</sup> John Buridan, *Super libros Ethicorum* 6 q. 14, f. 129<sup>vb</sup>: "Hec autem que dicta sunt in hiis opinionibus forte magis speculabilia sunt quam pertineant ad istam scientiam; sunt etiam multum generalia; sicut autem dicitur secundo huius sermones quidem uniuersales inaniore sunt, particulares vero veriores. Idcirco magis particulariter oportet de hiis perscrutari".

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 130<sup>ra</sup>: "... propter quod manifestum est quod iste prudentie idem habitus sunt et non alius secundum rem: illo enim habitu et illa operatione quo vel qua aliis procuramus bona, eodem habitu et eadem operatione nobis bonum virtutis acquirimus. "Esse tamen non idem ipsis—ut dicit Aristoteles—id est ille habitus idem existens secundum rem diuersificari potest secundum rationem".

devoted to one's own good, but in the fact that it focusses on the wrong kind of goods: material goods do not allow for a compatibility between the interests of the individual and the common good.<sup>69</sup>

From this point of view, Buridan's defence of the unity of prudence appears to reflect social prejudice, although it is most likely that *vulgus* has a moral rather than a sociological connotation. This interpretation can be confirmed by Buridan's treatment of the following question, which had also been raised by Henry of Friemar: *utrum prudentia politica et prudentia legispositiva sint idem habitus*. In this context, where *prudentia politica* signifies precisely an aspect of political prudence that can be distinguished from *legispositiva*, a question arises about the relationship between the ruler and the subjects. Buridan refuses to consider them as essentially different, arguing that if the opposite were true, then losing or acquiring power would affect the virtue of a human being. Relying on a lengthy quotation from Seneca, Buridan rejects as untenable such a conclusion.<sup>70</sup> The very existence of *doctores moralium* such as Seneca and Cicero, who taught princes how to legislate and taught their subjects as well, shows, according to the Parisian master, the unity of prudence.<sup>71</sup> Princes and subjects, shoemakers and sailors, the rich and the poor, all share the same virtue.<sup>72</sup> The answer could be different only if 'prudence' meant the ability to perform external actions that are proper to some social or political position. Only if taken in this sense would the prudence of the ruler not be the same as the prudence of his subjects.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid.: "Hec autem opinio in hoc verum assumit quod prudentia monostica que est vere et simpliciter prudentia consistit in bene consiliari posse et operari ad acquirenda sibipso bona, sed errat in hoc, quod credat bona corporis et exteriora esse bona simpliciter et optima; prudens igitur simpliciter non nititur sibi diuitias acquirere".

<sup>70</sup> Ibid. q. 15, f. 130<sup>va</sup>: "Item si alia esset prudentia legislatoris et subditi, sequeretur quod fortuna de prudente faceret imprudentem et e converso; consequens est falsum, unde Seneca ad Lucillum epistula subinde dicit 'sapiens quidem, id est prudens, vincit virtute fortunam'". On Seneca's importance for Buridan, see James J. Walsh, "Buridan and Seneca", *Journal of the History of Ideas* 27 (1966), 23–40.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. f. 130<sup>vb</sup>: "Iterum hoc manifeste potest apparere si aspexerimus ad antiquos patres, Aristoteles, Senecam, Tullium et ceteros moralium doctores, qui et principes et subditos prudenter docuerunt et principum consules fuerunt ad ponendum leges, quod non fuisset si non habuissent prudentiam hanc et aliam".

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.: "Cum ergo diximus eandem esse prudentiam principis et subditi et cuiuscumque viri locuti sumus de prudentia simpliciter secundum quam habens dicitur bonus homo, sic scilicet intelligendo quod Sortes eadem prudentia erit bonus homo si fuerit princeps et si fuerit subditus et si dives et si pauper et si corarius et si nauta et si carpentator et universaliter ad quemcumque statum pervenerit sed bonum".

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., f. 131<sup>ra</sup>.

The fourth and last question devoted by Buridan to this cluster of problems bears the title *utrum prudentia sit idem habitus cum scientia morali tradita in libro ethicorum, politicorum et economicorum et etiam in libris legum et decretorum*.<sup>74</sup> Here Buridan discusses in detail a distinction that already emerged in Aquinas's and in Henry of Friemar's commentaries,<sup>75</sup> namely the distinction between *politica* as a *habitus scientificus* (a set of cognitions) and *politica* as a *prudentia* that is not a mere knowledge concerning action, but a moral disposition of the soul. In the first place, Buridan rejects a solution according to which the difference between science and prudence can be reduced to the circumstance that *habitus scientifici* concern the universal, prudence, on the contrary, the singular. In his opinion, prudence does consist of what he calls universal propositions: their difference from the propositions proper to metaphysics or physics does not consist in their universality or lack of it, but in their capacity to guide our actions. Prudence contains therefore a set of propositions, be they in the form of self-evident first principles or conclusions drawn from those principles. This position allows him to maintain that the content of the books of the *scientia moralis* does not differ essentially from prudence.<sup>76</sup> In this way, Buridan stresses again the unity of prudence, also with respect to knowledge concerning moral action; yet at the same time he implicitly raises the question of wicked persons who know moral principles perfectly but do not act correctly. However, whether Buridan can be regarded as an 'ethical intellectualist' is a problem beyond the limits of the present paper.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. q. 17, ff. 132<sup>va</sup>–133<sup>va</sup>.

<sup>75</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 6.7, p. 357: "... omnia ergo de quibus hic fit mentio in tantum sunt species prudentiae in quantum non in ratione sola consistunt, sed habent aliquid in appetitu; in quantum enim sunt in sola ratione, dicuntur quedam scientiae practicae, scilicet ethica, yconomica et politica".

<sup>76</sup> John Buridan, *Super libros Ethicorum* 6 q. 17, f. 133<sup>va</sup>: "videtur mihi quod habitus acquisitus ex doctrina librorum legum, decretorum et universaliter librorum moralium pertinet ad prudentiam, ita quod prudentia si sit perfecta continet in se habitum illum vel consimilem tanquam partem quandam ipsius, quoniam prudentia non est alius habitus quam secundum quem scimus quid et quomodo sit agendum ad bene vivendum et feliciter...".

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.: "... nulli pravi sciunt conclusiones ymo neque principia illorum librorum, licet enim bene sciant quid in illis libris scriptum sit et quid preceptum et quid prohibitum, tamen neque conclusionibus neque principiis neque huiusmodi preceptis nec prohibitionibus acquiescunt secundum mentem interiorem". On the problem of ethical intellectualism see recently István Bejczy, "Ethique et connaissance au moyen âge: La vertu entre intellectualisme et volontarisme", in *Etica e conoscenza nel XIII e XIV secolo*, ed. Irene Zavattero (Arezzo, 2006), 9–13.

*Conclusion*

Looking back over the development described in this brief survey, one can see the ‘history’ of political prudence from the Latin Eustratius to Buridan as a telling example of the creativity of the medieval commentary tradition on the *Nicomachean Ethics*. The expression *prudentia politica*, which does not surface as such in the Latin translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics* becomes, thanks to Eustratius’s mediating role, a key concept in medieval Latin commentaries on chapter 6.8. In this process, *prudentia politica* assumes two different meanings: in a general sense, it designates prudence concerned with the good of the community; in a more specific one, the prudence of the individual as a subject or ordinary citizen in a political community. In the latter case, political prudence is opposed to the legislative prudence attributed especially to the rulers. Commentators discuss the relationship between this kind of prudence and other aspects of the same virtue. In such discussions we perceive also a distinct echo of different political tendencies. Giles of Rome’s *De regimine principum* supports without any difficulty the idea of a clear-cut distinction between the prudence of the ruler and that of the subjects, while other authors are more concerned to safeguard the moral legitimacy of elections.

No commentary that I have examined is ready to accept the idea of a complete separation between individual ethics and politics. The fact itself, however, that even critics of Aquinas’s solution use the concept of *prudentia politica* in its different meanings, shows that the notion of different, albeit related, ‘spheres’ of ethical activity could gain ground in the medieval reception of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

# THE VIRTUE OF VIRGINITY: THE ARISTOTELIAN CHALLENGE

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## *Introduction*

Most of the virtues discussed by medieval commentators on the *Nicomachean Ethics* were obviously those which Aristotle himself had defined and treated as such. Given the expository character of this literary genre this is hardly surprising, and indeed most contributions to this volume consider how medieval commentators interpreted and further developed such “Aristotelian” virtues as justice, magnanimity, courage, etc. It might be more surprising to find accounts of virtues which do not appear in the Aristotelian text. Such is the case for virginity. Even though virginity does not figure among Aristotle’s *aretai*, most medieval commentators of the *Ethics* considered it to be a moral virtue and included a discussion of it in their commentaries.

For the study of virtue ethics, the discussion of virginity is of double interest. It presents a highly interesting case of the treatment of a specifically Christian virtue in commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Moreover, it provides an eloquent example of a distinctly medieval reaction to the newly discovered Aristotelian text. The reaction illustrates the challenge posed by certain parts and aspects of Aristotle’s virtue ethics to the beliefs and values of its medieval Christian recipients, and exemplifies the interaction of Aristotle’s system with existing medieval traditions of moral thought.

The term virginity can be used in different ways and thus requires some explanation. The meaning most commonly associated with this term at present is female bodily integrity, or simply the state preceding sexual practice. Later medieval philosophers and theologians some-

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times used the term virginity in this sense, but when discussing *virginitas* in terms of a *virtus*, they usually had in mind a deliberate choice, in both men and women, to perpetually abstain from sex and marriage for the sake of religious, or indeed philosophical, contemplation. Occasionally it seems also to have been used as a simple synonym for sexual abstinence.<sup>1</sup>

### *The medieval virginal ideal*

In order to understand the discussion of virginity in medieval *Ethics* commentaries, a few remarks need to be made on the place and value of virginal life in medieval thought and culture. The medieval readers and commentators of the *Nicomachean Ethics* were the heirs of a long tradition of Christian thought that valued religiously motivated virginity, i.e. virginity “for the sake of the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 19:11–12), as one of the highest and most praiseworthy expressions of the *vita christiana*.

The foundations of the Christian virginal ideal had been laid in early Christianity and transmitted to medieval Latin Europe by the Latin church fathers. The Greeks and the Romans had sometimes, as in the case of Roman Vestals, practiced cultic virginity, and some philosophers (Theophrastus, Epictetus) had advocated celibacy for a life of philosophy. Generally speaking, however, the complete renunciation of sex and marriage was not considered in classical antiquity a hallmark of moral or religious proficiency. Aristotle’s insistence in the *Politics* on the natural and necessary character of marriage and procreation, but also his idea of a moderate use of sexual pleasure in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, are expressions of this basic cultural attitude.<sup>2</sup> Although the early Christian and patristic virginal ideal would lose much of its original vigour and

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<sup>1</sup> For the different meanings of virginity in thirteenth-century theology see Pierre Payer, *The Bridling of Desire: Views of Sex in the Later Middle Ages* (Toronto, 1993), 161–165, 252. See also Gerald of Odo, *Sententia et expositio cum questionibus... super libros Ethicorum* 4 q. 14 (Venice, 1500), f. 67<sup>rb</sup>: “ad virginitatem concurrunt duo, scilicet integritas corporis, et habitus electius huius integritatis. Et secundum hoc... dicenda sunt quinque. Primum quod integritas corporis est conditio nobilis. Secundum quod ipsa non est virtus moralis. Tertium quod habitus electius illius integritatis est virtus moralis...”.

<sup>2</sup> For ancient and early Christian attitudes to marriage and celibacy see Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York, 1988); see also Charles Munier, *Marriage et virginité dans l’église ancienne (Ie–IIIe siècles)* (Bern, 1987). For Aristotle’s views of marriage see e.g. Sabine Föllinger, *Differenz und*

polemic character during the Middle Ages, it would nonetheless live on. Among its most important and lasting institutional expressions are medieval monasticism and clerical celibacy as promoted and institutionalised in the Gregorian Reform.<sup>3</sup>

Notably two developments in the medieval virginal tradition are important for an understanding of the discussion on virginity in medieval *Ethics* commentaries. The first is the permeation of virginity into medieval moral thought. In the patristic and early medieval period virginity had been praised and exalted as a special Christian *charisma*, but usually it had not been considered in terms of a moral virtue. This was an innovation of the High Middle Ages. As Pierre Payer has shown, from the twelfth century theologians increasingly begin to associate virginity with the cardinal virtue of temperance. More precisely, they treat it as a part of what they consider to be a species of temperance responsible for the moderation in sexual matters and what they alternatively call continence or chastity (their vocabulary is not settled). In their view, continence or chastity consists of three parts: conjugal continence (*continentia coniugalis*), widowed continence (*continentia vidualis*), and virginity, the latter presenting in their eyes the *optimum* of this virtue. The source of this concept can be found in the tradition of exegesis of the parable of the sower (Matt. 13:1–23) which associated the thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and hundredfold rewards mentioned there with the merits of conjugal, widowed, and virginal life.<sup>4</sup>

It should be noted that with the inclusion of virginity within temperance and its species continence or chastity, a discussion emerged among medieval theologians as to whether virginity represents only a virtuous state, that is, a simple mode of the virtues of continence or chastity, or actually a special, fully-fledged virtue. Albert the Great argued that religiously motivated virginity, being in the first place a charisma given to the few, actually surpasses virtue and therefore cannot be seen as a virtue properly speaking. He would however admit that the complete sexual abstinence that characterizes the virginal state can be seen as

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*Gleichheit: Das Geschlechterverhältnis in der Sicht griechischer Philosophen des 4. bis 1. Jahrhunderts v. Chr.* (Stuttgart, 1996), 182–227.

<sup>3</sup> For the ideal of virginity in the Middle Ages see Payer, *The Bridling of Desire*; John Bugge, *Virginitas: An Essay in the History of a Medieval Ideal* (The Hague, 1975); *Medieval Purity and Piety: Essays on Medieval Clerical Celibacy and Religious Reform*, ed. Michael Frassetto (New York, 1998); *Medieval Virginitates*, ed. Anke Bernau, Ruth Evans, and Sarah Salih (Toronto, 2003).

<sup>4</sup> See Payer, *The Bridling of Desire*, 131–141.

the highest mode of the virtue of chastity. Others, like Thomas Aquinas and his followers, held that virginity represents a *virtus specialis*, a virtue in its own right, and an independent subspecies of chastity.<sup>5</sup>

Another high medieval development is of no less importance for the discussion of virginity in medieval *Ethics* commentaries: the emergence of the ideal of philosophical celibacy. In Christian antiquity and in the Early Middle Ages virginity had been an exclusively religious ideal, in the sense that its purpose and value were seen in enabling, and being an expression of, a more intense Christian life. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries it became moreover a philosophical ideal—that is, it came to be considered a hallmark, and indeed a necessary condition, of the life of a true philosopher. The rise of philosophical celibacy can be seen as a part of the high medieval *prise de conscience* of philosophers as an independent professional and social group, distinct from that of theologians. Emerging as a philosophical counterpart to religiously motivated virginity and celibacy, it sought legitimacy in the ideal of singleness for the sake of philosophy as upheld by some ancient philosophers. Its adherents would use Theophrastus's satirical dissuasion of a philosopher from marriage, transmitted through Jerome's *Adversus Iovinianum*, as their main *auctoritas*.<sup>6</sup>

#### *Aristotle's doctrine of temperance*

If until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the medieval appreciation of virginity developed unquestioned, the rediscovery of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*<sup>7</sup> confronted the medieval virginal ideal with a serious

<sup>5</sup> See *ibid.*, 166.

<sup>6</sup> On medieval philosophical celibacy see Philippe Delhaye, "Le dossier anti-matrimonial de l'*Adversus Iovinianum* et son influence sur quelques écrits latins du XIIe siècle", *Mediaeval Studies* 13 (1951), 65–86; Katharina M. Wilson and Elizabeth M. Makowski, *Wykked Wyves and the Woes of Marriage: Misogamous Literature from Juvenal to Chaucer* (Albany, 1990), 61–108; Alain De Libera, *Penser au moyen âge* (Paris, 1991), 143–179, 220–245; Detlef Roth, "An uxor ducenda: Zur Geschichte eines Topos von der Antike bis zur Frühen Neuzeit", in *Geschlechterbeziehungen und Textfunktionen: Studien zu Eheschriften der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Rüdiger Schnell (Tübingen, 1998), 171–232; *id.*, "Mittelalterliche Misogynie—ein Mythos? Die antiken *molestiae nuptiarum* im *Adversus Iovinianum* und ihre Rezeption in der lateinischen Literatur des 12. Jahrhunderts", *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 80 (1998), 39–66.

<sup>7</sup> The first Latin translations, called *Ethica nova* (book 1) and *Ethica vetus* (book 2 and 3), probably date from ca. 1150; in 1246/48, Robert Grosseteste translated the entire work.

challenge. Even though the Stagirite nowhere tackles virginity explicitly, his account of temperance in the *Nicomachean Ethics* called into question the idea of virginity being a part of this cardinal virtue. What is more, implying that virginity could possibly be considered a *vice*, and thus negative and immoral, Aristotle's doctrine of temperance threatened the medieval virginal ideal as a whole.

According to Aristotle, temperance is the virtue which regulates pleasures related to touch (*tactus*). These pleasures, as he understands them, are guttural and sexual pleasures. In accordance with his general doctrine of the mean, he defines temperance as a mean between excess and deficiency, in this case between indulging too much in pleasures of this type and completely avoiding them. The excess in the desire and use of guttural and sexual pleasures he calls intemperance (*intemperantia*), and the deficiency insensibility (*insensibilitas*).

For the purposes of this study, it is the concept of insensibility as a deficiency of temperance (or a vice, as medieval commentators called it) that is of the greatest importance. In *EN* 2.2 Aristotle describes those who depart from the mean of temperance by completely avoiding sexual and guttural pleasures as being unrefined and barbarous (*agrestes*).<sup>8</sup> His main account of insensibility, however, comes in *EN* 3.14. Even though in this passage he gives only the example of guttural pleasures, he clearly means the avoidance of all "pleasures of touch", including sexual pleasures. According to the Stagirite the total avoidance of sensual pleasures is not human and hard to find:

People who fall short with regard to pleasures and delight in them less than they should are hardly to be found; for such insensibility is not human. Even other animals distinguish different kinds of food and enjoy some and not others; and if there is any one who finds nothing pleasant and nothing more attractive than anything else, he must be something quite different from a man; this sort of person has not received a name because he hardly occurs.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Aristotle, *Ethica nicomachea* 2.2 (1104a22–26), trans. Robert Grosseteste (*recensio pura*), ed. René-Antoine Gauthier (Leiden-Brussels, 1972–1974), 165: "Similiter autem et qui omni voluptate potitur et neque ab una recedit, intemperatus est. Qui autem omnes fugit quemadmodum agrestes, insensibilis. Corruptitur enim temperancia et fortitudo, a superhabundancia et defectu; a medietate autem salvatur".

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* 3.14 (1119a5–10), p. 199: "Deficientes autem circa delectationes et minus quam oportet gaudentes, non multum fiunt. Non enim humana est talis insensibilitas. Et enim reliqua animalia, discernunt cibos, et hiis quidem gaudent, hiis autem non. Si autem huic nichil est delectabile neque differt alterum ab altero, longe utique

If one takes the Stagirite's theory, as expressed in these passages, to the letter, then virginity as a complete and voluntary abstention from sexual pleasures appears to be no longer one of the most perfect expressions of the virtue of temperance, as it had hitherto been considered by medieval thinkers, but rather to deviate from this virtue into the extreme that Aristotle calls insensibility. In other words, virginity is not a virtue but a vice! This is precisely the conclusion that medieval readers of the *Nicomachean Ethics* arrived at.<sup>10</sup> Some of them found an implicit confirmation of Aristotle's allegedly deprecating view of virginity in two other themes in his thought. The first is his concept, recurrent in a number of Aristotelian writings, of generation as a necessary means for the perpetuation of sublunary species. The second theme, closely related to the first, is his insistence on the natural and necessary character of marriage as an institution providing for the continuation of the human race and standing at the basis of the domestic and political community. One encounters this theme in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (book 8), but also in the *Politics* (book 1) and the pseudo-Aristotelian *Economics*. Some medieval readers concluded that if generation is indispensable for the perpetuation of the species and if marriage is natural, then virginity must be *contra naturam*.<sup>11</sup> It is precisely these conclusions that figure in Etienne Tempier's famous 1277 condemnation of 219 "heretical" philosophical theses. In thesis number 169 the Parisian bishop condemns the opinion "that perfect abstinence from the act of the flesh corrupts virtue and the species".<sup>12</sup>

The conclusion that virginity, when measured against Aristotle's doctrine of temperance, is a vice, is specific to the Latin Middle Ages. It

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erit ab hominem esse. Non sortitus est autem talis nomine, propter non multum fieri". The English translation is taken from Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 3.11, trans. William D. Ross, rev. James O. Urmson, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton, 1995) 2: 1766.

<sup>10</sup> I leave open the question as to whether this conclusion does justice to Aristotle's thought or not. Especially when read against Aristotle's account of temperance as a whole and against his arguments for the superiority of the pleasures of the contemplative life in book 10, one might arrive at a negative answer. What matters for the purpose of this study is that the conclusion that virginity amounts to insensibility was actually drawn by medieval readers.

<sup>11</sup> See Föllinger, *Differenz und Gleichheit*, 182–227; Pavel Blažek, *Die mittelalterliche Rezeption der aristotelischen Philosophie der Ehe: Von Robert Grosseteste bis Bartholomäus von Brügge (1246/1247–1309)* (Leiden, 2007).

<sup>12</sup> For a discussion of this thesis see De Libera, *Penser au moyen âge*, 211–224; Roland Hissette, *Enquête sur les 219 articles condamnés à Paris le 7 mars 1277* (Louvain–Paris, 1977), 299–300.

arises neither in Averroes's commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, translated in 1244 by Hermannus Alemanus, nor in the set of anonymous Greek scholia to the *Ethics* which Robert Grosseteste had translated as a companion to his translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

*Identifying the Aristotelian challenge: Bonaventure and Aquinas*

The rediscovery of Aristotle's concept of temperance with its possible repercussions for the medieval virginal ideal was to generate an intense academic discussion on the legitimacy and moral value of virginity. This discussion took place within theology before it affected philosophical ethics.

The earliest known identification of Aristotle's account of temperance as a potential threat to the virtue of virginity is found in Bonaventure's commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sententiae*, written in Paris shortly after the middle of the thirteenth century. Discussing the question *utrum virginitas sit virtus*, Bonaventure introduces the Aristotelian doctrine of the mean as a counterargument against the virtuous nature of virginity, which consists in extreme abstinence.<sup>13</sup> After a somewhat sarcastic remark on the doctrine of the mean (he says that this doctrine is not to be understood as a statement about the number of women one should sleep with, for if this were the case, in order to be chaste one would have to sleep with half of all women in the world, because that is precisely the mean between all women and none) Bonaventure tacitly reinterprets Aristotle's positive notion of pleasure in a rather negative, Augustinian sense as meaning 'incitements of the flesh'. In other words, he turns Aristotelian pleasure into what comes close to Augustinian concupiscence. This enables him to claim that virginity does not fall under insensibility, for insensibility would mean not feeling any *passiones carnis* whatsoever, that is, it would be a kind of inborn frigidity. On the contrary, to feel passions of the flesh but not to consent to them is a sign of virtue, and this is precisely the case with virginity. However, there can be cases when, through the work of God's grace, a virgin does not feel

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<sup>13</sup> Bonaventure, *In quartum librum Sententiarum* IV.33.2.1, *Opera omnia*, ed. Collegium S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas (Quaracchi, 1882–1901) 4: 753: "Omnis virtus, quae non est in finem, in medietate consistit; sed virginitas in extremo, quia omnino abstinet: ergo etc."

any incitements of the flesh at all (thus being by Aristotelian standards “insensible”) while still remaining virtuous.<sup>14</sup>

If the importance of Bonaventure’s discussion consists in his being the first known author to have tackled the Aristotelian challenge to virginity, the historical value of the solutions proposed in the theological writings of Thomas Aquinas lies in their influence on later authors, including commentators of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Aquinas discusses the Aristotelian challenge to virginity in three of his theological works: his commentary on the *Sententiae*, his *Summa contra gentiles*, and his *Summa theologiae*. The solution he proposes in these three works is essentially the same. While Bonaventure plays on the notion of pleasure, Thomas plays on the notion of the mean and the concept of right reason.

According to Thomas, those who say that virginity cannot be a virtue because it deflects from the mean, misunderstand what the *medium virtutis* consists of. The criterion which determines the mean of a virtue is not so much the quantity of what is regulated by that virtue as its conformity to right reason (*recta ratio*). It can thus occur that a virtue is quantitatively speaking, with regard to its subject matter, in an extreme position and yet, with respect to the *recta ratio*, at the mean. As examples Thomas cites two virtues treated by Aristotle himself in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, magnanimity and magnificence. These, he argues, are also in an extreme position with regard to their subject matters, honour and wealth, and yet nobody would doubt them to be virtues. By the same token virginity, although being in an extreme position with regard to its subject matter, sexual pleasure, is nonetheless at the mean with regard to right reason, for it enables spiritual and speculative contemplation (*divina contemplatio, contemplatio veritatis*) which is hindered by sexual intercourse. According to Thomas, Aristotle’s insensibility refers to the complete abstinence of pleasure which is not in conformity with right reason, such as would occur if one would abhor sensual pleasures *per se*. The virgin, however, does not abstain from all pleasures but only from sexual pleasures, and abstains from them in accordance with right reason.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 754. Bonaventura also discusses virginity in *Quaestiones disputatae de perfectione evangelica* 3.2, *Opera omnia* 5: 172, 175; *Collationes in Hexaemeron* 5, ibid., p. 355.

<sup>15</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *In quatuor libros Sententiarum* IV.33.3.2, *Opera omnia*, ed. Roberto Busa (Stuttgart–Bad Canstatt, 1980) 1: 602; *Summa contra gentiles* III.136–137, *Opera omnia iussu Leonis XIII edita* (Rome, 1882–) 14: 412–413; *Summa theologiae* II.II.152.2, *Opera omnia* 10: 200–201.

*The discussion of virginity in commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics*

The first to draw attention to the discussion on virginity generated by Aristotle's doctrine of temperance and insensibility, both in *Ethics* commentaries and elsewhere, was René-Antoine Gauthier.<sup>16</sup> Two scholars who have recently addressed the issue at some length are Alain De Libera and Pierre Payer. De Libera dedicated a few pages of *Penser au moyen âge* to the topic, in the context of his discussion of the theses condemned in 1277 which relate to human sexuality.<sup>17</sup> Payer's excellent study *The Bridling of Desire* examines the Aristotelian challenge in the context of a broader discussion of later medieval ideas on sex and sexual self-restraint.<sup>18</sup> What these and other recent studies of the medieval aftermath of Aristotle's doctrine of temperance and insensibility have in common is that they pay relatively little attention to *Ethics* commentaries, concentrating instead on other sources such as the theological writings of Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas, or Siger of Brabant's quaestio *Qualis status magis competat philosophis*.<sup>19</sup> The present study therefore examines medieval *Ethics* commentaries in particular. Its aim is to present a survey of the discussion of virginity in all extant commentaries up to John Buridan's, focussing especially on how medieval commentators react to the Aristotelian challenge to this Christian virtue.

Interestingly, one does not find a discussion of virginity either in the *Ethica vetus* commentaries<sup>19</sup> or in the two commentaries of Albert the Great. A possible explanation for this might lie in Albert's understanding of *insensibilitas*. While Thomas understands insensibility as the irrational and purposeless avoidance of sensual pleasure, Albert gives it a much more radical explanation in his *Super Ethica*, as a total, and for

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<sup>16</sup> René-Antoine Gauthier, "Trois commentaires 'averroïstes' sur l'Éthique à Nicomaque", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 16 (1947–1948), esp. 298, referring to Thomas Aquinas (*Summa theologiae*, *Sententia libri Ethicorum*) and to the *Ethics* commentaries of Radulphus Brito (at that time considered anonymous), Giles of Orléans, and of James of Douai (?).

<sup>17</sup> De Libera, *Penser au moyen âge*, 211–224.

<sup>18</sup> Payer, *The Bridling of Desire*, 167–170. See also Aristotle, *L'Éthique à Nicomaque*, ed. René-Antoine Gauthier and Jean-Yves Jolif (Louvain–Paris, 1970) 2.1: 246; Luca Bianchi, *Il vescovo e i filosofi: La condanna parigina del 1277 e l'evoluzione dell'aristotelismo scolastico* (Bergamo, 1990), 150; Hissette, *Enquête sur les 219 articles*, 299–300.

<sup>19</sup> For information regarding the absence of a discussion of virginity in these commentaries I would like to express my deep gratitude to Valeria Buffon (commentary of Pseudo-Peckham; he briefly mentions virginity, but does not discuss it in relation to insensibility), Anthony Celano (commentary of Robert Kilwardby), Claude Lafleur (*Commentarium abrinense in Ethicam ueterem*), and Irene Zavattero (*Lectura in Ethicam ueterem*).



human beings thus impossible, privation of any sort of sensual experience or, alternatively, as an indulgence in certain perverted and inhuman forms of “asceticism”. He uses the devouring of coals as his example.<sup>20</sup> It could be due to this radical interpretation of *insensibilitas* that Albert does not perceive Aristotle’s doctrine of insensibility as a threat to the virginal ideal. Later commentators who do not discuss virginity include Peter of Auvergne, Peter of Corveheda, Guido Vernani, and Walter Burley.

### *Thomas Aquinas*

The first commentator of the *Nicomachean Ethics* to discuss virginity is Thomas Aquinas. His rather brief assessment of the Aristotelian challenge in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* reads as a summary of the solution proposed in his theological writings, notably in his *Summa theologiae*. The mean of temperance is determined not by the amount of pleasure, but by right reason. Virginity, therefore, cannot be said to fall under insensibility, firstly because the virgin does not abstain from all pleasures but only from sexual ones, and secondly because the virgin abstains from these pleasures not in opposition to, but in accordance with, right reason. In one point, however, his treatment differs from what he says in his theological writings. Instead of citing religious contemplation as the utmost “rational” motive for virginity, he this time uses the life of the soldier as an example of “rational” sexual abstinence:

And the same applies also to temperance. *The one who indulges in every pleasure and avoids none, becomes intemperate, while the one who avoids all, like boors do without reason, becomes insensible.* However, one cannot deduce from this that virginity, which abstains from all venereal pleasure, is a vice, for it does not abstain from all pleasures *tout court* and it abstains from these pleasures according to right reason. In the same way it is not a vice that some soldiers abstain from all sexual pleasures in order to be more free for their military endeavours. This has been said because *temperance and courage are destroyed through excess and defect and preserved by the mean.* The mean however is not defined by quantity but according to right reason.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> See Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 3.14 (245), ed. Wilhelm Kübel, *Opera omnia* (Münster, 1951–) 14: 214.

<sup>21</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum* 2.2, ed. René-Antoine Gauthier, *Opera*

Later in his commentary, discussing Aristotle's account of temperance, he adds a further example of rationally motivated, and thus "virtuous", sexual abstinence—the life of merchants:

It does not pertain to insensibility that some people abstain from pleasures in order to attain an honest and useful goal, like merchants for the sake of profit or soldiers for the sake of victory...<sup>22</sup>

Thomas's avoidance of religious examples can be explained by his tendency to expound Aristotle's text charitably, without explicitly measuring the Stagirite's teachings by the standards of Christian doctrine. His interpretation saves the Christian ideal of virginity without appealing to other than rational and natural categories.

*James of Douai (?)*

The majority of the Parisian Arts Masters who around 1300 commented on the *Nicomachean Ethics* accept the solution to the Aristotelian challenge proposed in the theological writings and the *Ethics* commentary of Thomas Aquinas. Their contribution to the apology of virginity mainly consists in expanding on Aquinas' account.

The first of these *Ethics* commentaries was written some time before 1300 and may or may not be the work of James of Douai.<sup>23</sup> In relation to Aristotle's first account of temperance and insensibility in the second book of the *Ethics*, the author asks the question *utrum virginitas sit virtus*. Referring to the *opinio communis* of "wise men", he argues that virginity is a virtue and that it fulfils the Aristotelian definition of virtue as a

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*omnia* 47: 81: "Et ita est etiam ex parte temperantiae; ille enim qui potitur qualibet voluptate et nullam vitat efficitur intemperatus, qui autem omnes vitat sicut homines agrestes absque ratione faciunt, iste efficitur insensibilis. Nec tamen ex hoc accipi potest quod virginitas, que abstinet ab omni delectatione venerea, sit vitium; tum quia per hoc non abstinet ab omnibus delectationibus, tum quia ab his delectationibus abstinet secundum rationem rectam; quemadmodum etiam non est vitiosum quod aliqui milites abstinent ab omnibus delectationibus venereis ut liberius vacent rebus bellicis. Haec autem ideo dicta sunt quia temperantia et fortitudo corrumpitur ex superhabundantia et defectu, a medietate autem salvatur; que quidem medietas accipitur non secundum quantitatem, sed secundum rationem rectam". The translation is mine. I have italicized the passages which present a paraphrase of Aristotle's text.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* 3,21, p. 188: "Non autem ad hanc insensibilitatem pertinet quod aliqui a delectationibus absteant propter aliquem finem utilem vel honestum, sicut negotiatores propter luca et milites propter victoriam...".

<sup>23</sup> On this commentary see Gauthier, "Trois commentaires", 224–229. Iacopo Costa is preparing a critical edition of the text.

praiseworthy habit according to right reason (*habitus laudabilis secundum rectam rationem*). He distinguishes in the virtue of virginity a material and a formal principle, the first consisting of bodily integrity, the second of a decision to perpetually abstain from sexual intercourse. Like Thomas, he sees in virginity a *virtus specialis*, distinct from, and more excellent than, simple chastity.<sup>24</sup>

His solution to the Aristotelian challenge to virginity is basically the same as that proposed by Thomas. He too argues that even though virginity does not consist in the mean quantitatively speaking, *secundum rem* (that is, with regard to the quantity of sexual pleasures), it nevertheless consists in the mean rationally speaking, *secundum rationem*.<sup>25</sup> What is more, he tries to demonstrate that the conclusion that virginity deviates from the mean of temperance and falls under the vice of insensibility is nowhere implied by the Aristotelian text. According to the commentator, a careful reading of the Stagirite shows that his account of insensibility does not disprove virginity's being a virtue. Applying arguments to his exegesis of Aristotle's first passage on insensibility (*Qui autem omnes [voluptates] fugit quemadmodum agrestes, insensibilis*) that had already been employed by Thomas, he explains that the *philosophus* calls insensible only that man who avoids every pleasure (*omnem delectationem*). The virgin, however, does not evade all, but only sexual, pleasures. Another reason why Aristotle cannot mean by insensibility virginity is that he calls the insensible *agrestis*, which the commentator seems to read as a synonym for 'irrational'. Virginity however, consists not of irrational but of rational abstinence from sexual pleasure.<sup>26</sup>

If the author of this commentary and Thomas Aquinas agree in their basic approach to the Aristotelian challenge to virginity, they nonethe-

<sup>24</sup> James of Douai (?), *Questiones in Ethicam* 2 q. 6, Paris BN lat. 14698, f. 144<sup>rb-va</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 144<sup>rb</sup> (ratio contra): "Item, virtus consistit in medio. Et virginitas non consistit in medio. Immo consistit in defectu quodam delectationum venerearum, ergo et cetera"; f. 144<sup>va</sup> (ad rationem): "Ad aliam rationem dico, quod licet virginitas non consistit in medio secundum rem, tamen consistit in medio secundum rationem. Cum enim appetitus sensitivus non appetat delectationes venereas, nec eas persequitur, tunc appetitus sensitivus regitur ratione et adequatur recte rationi. Et ideo virginitas consistit in quoddam medio secundum rationem".

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 144<sup>va</sup>: "Unde illud quod dicit Philosophus in littera non probat quod virginitas non sit virtus. Dicit enim, quod homo, qui fugit omnem delectationem est insensibilis. Modo ita est quod in virginitate non est defectus omnis delectationis, sed tantum delectationis veneree. Item, intelligit Philosophus, quod homo qui fugit omnem delectationem sit homo agrestis. Ille non est virtuosus. In virginitate autem non fugit homo omnem delectationem sine ratione, immo cum recta ratione, ut homo melius et liberius possit vacare studio et contemplationi".

less differ in their emphasis and detail. As we have seen, for Thomas virginity consists in the mean *secundum rationem* because it is ordered towards a reasonable goal, which in the *Summa theologiae* is defined as *contemplatio veritatis* and *divina contemplatio*, while in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* it is associated with the life of soldiers and merchants. The author of our commentary also speaks of *contemplatio* as the rationale for virginity. However, as is evident from the prologue to the commentary, what he means by it is specifically philosophical contemplation (*contemplatio philosophica*). Furthermore, he also mentions *studium* as a reasonable motive for virginity, meaning again, as confirmed by the prologue, philosophical scholarship.<sup>27</sup> Whereas according to Thomas the rationale for virginity lies in the Christian *vita contemplativa* (*Summa theologiae*) or in military or commercial life (*Sententia libri Ethicorum*), in the *Ethics* commentary attributed to James of Douai it is the philosophical life which legitimizes perpetual sexual abstinence and makes it virtuous.

Another point in which the commentator differs from Thomas is in his explanation as to why contemplation and scholarship are best practiced in a virginal or celibate life. In the *Summa theologiae*, Thomas sees the obstacle to the *vita contemplativa* primarily in sexual activity, which he believes to disturb the mind. Our commentator, by contrast, sees the obstacle to contemplation and scholarship not in sex itself, but rather in the duties which result from being married and having a family. While Thomas's explanation draws on a tradition of thought going back to the church fathers, the Parisian commentator builds his argumentation on Theophrastus's famous description of the *molestiae nuptiarum* transmitted through Jerome's *Adversus Iovinianum* and popular among medieval philosophers ever since its first use in Abelard's *Historia calamitatum*:

It is known that a man bound in wedlock has many worries which the celibate does not have. But these worries prevent him from contemplation and scholarship. According to right reason, it is therefore both suitable and praiseworthy for a man to abstain from all venereal pleasure in order to be more free for scholarship and contemplation. Therefore,

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<sup>27</sup> The beginning of the prologue has been edited by Gauthier, "Trois commentaires", 226–227. It reads as an apology of philosophers and their *métier*: "Quamvis scriptum sit ab Alexandro quod viri philosophici et dantes se studio et contemplationi sint naturaliter virtuosii, utpote casti et temperati... tamen secundum communem hominum opinionem non est ita, licet ita sit secundum veritatem... Primum est, quod homines qui dant se studio et contemplationi philosophicae sunt virtuosii, quia ipsi delectantur delectatione intellectuali...".

above all, those devoted to scholarship and contemplation have to strive to acquire virtue [i.e. the virtue of virginity].<sup>28</sup>

All in all, the discussion of virginity in this commentary is very similar to that found in the *quaestio* by Siger of Brabant: *Qualis status magis competat philosophis?*<sup>29</sup> The question reads as a philosophical *plaidoyer* for the celibacy of a philosopher. Siger, too, adopts the “Thomistic” defence of the legitimacy of virginity vis-à-vis Aristotle, adapting it specifically to the *vita philosophica*, and he, too, draws on the idea of the burdens of marriage, using it as an argument in favour of philosophical celibacy.<sup>29</sup>

### *Radulphus Brito*

Another *Ethics* commentary written at Paris around 1300 which confronts Aristotle’s alleged challenge to virginity is that by Radulphus Brito.<sup>30</sup> Radulphus’s discussion of virginity is almost entirely centred on a philosophical refutation of the Aristotelian challenge. The Arts Master too adopts the “Thomistic” solution, arguing that virginity is in an extreme position only *secundum rem* whereas *secundum rationem* it entirely stands on the virtuous mean, because it is ordered towards the contemplation of truth and serves for the conservation of the *bonum rationis*. He too sees the principal obstacle to intellectual contemplation in the perturbing effect of sexual pleasures on the use of reason, a position for which he finds confirmation in the *Nicomachean Ethics* itself.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> James of Douai (?), *Questiones in Ethicam* 2 q. 6, f. 144<sup>rb</sup>: “Item constat, quod homo ligatus per matrimonium sollicitudinem habet de multis de quibus sollicitudinem non habet homo liberus. Sollicitudo autem impedit hominem a contemplatione et studio. Et ideo secundum rectam rationem est istud eligibile et laudabile, ut homo abstineat se ab omni delectatione venerea, ut melius et liberius possit vacare studio et contemplationi. Unde precipue qui dati sunt studio et contemplationi debent studere ad acquisitionem virtutis”.

<sup>29</sup> Siger of Brabant, *Quaestiones morales* 4, in *Ecrits de logique, de morale et de physique*, ed. Bernardo Bazán (Louvain, 1974), 102–103.

<sup>30</sup> I am deeply indebted to Iacopo Costa who has kindly allowed me to use his unpublished critical edition of the commentary. See Iacopo Costa, “Il commento all’*Etica nicomachea* di Radulfo Brito: Edizione critica del testo con uno studio critico, storico e dottrinale” (Ph.D. diss. Università degli studi di Salerno/Université de Paris IV—Sorbonne, 2007).

<sup>31</sup> Radulphus Brito, *Questiones in Ethicam* 3 q. 22, cited from Costa, “Il commento”: “Deinde iuxta hoc statim queratur utrum uirginitas sit uirtus. Arguitur quod non. Quia uirtus consistit in medio; modo uirginitas non consistit in medio, immo in extremo, quia consistit in hoc quod aliquis abstinet ab omnibus ueneris, et istud est extremum;

The original contribution of Radulphus to the discussion of the Aristotelian challenge lies in his explanation as to why virginity *ipso facto* does not fall under insensibility. The commentator suggests that Aristotle's insensibility means only the avoidance of pleasurable acts necessary for the life of the individual, such as eating and drinking. According to his analysis, virginity cannot fall under insensibility, because it consists of the avoidance of vehement pleasures which impede the use of reason. Such pleasures are as a rule to be avoided. Radulphus even goes so far as to call all sexual acts vile (*turpes*) and beastly (*bestiales*), because they are common to both men and animals.<sup>32</sup>

The commentary is also of interest in another respect. Radulphus makes a highly interesting remark which shows that the issue of the virtuous character of virginity—both in itself, as a philosophical and theological problem, and as a problem of right exegesis of the Stagirite's thought—was probably much more controversial than the sources discussed so far might suggest. His remark may also help to explain why in 1277 Etienne Tempier had felt obliged to condemn the thesis that complete sexual renunciation corrupts virtue and the species, at a time when nobody in the preserved sources actually seemed to profess this:

As for the second question [as to whether virginity is a virtue] there are different opinions. It is true that according to our faith and according to truth one must hold that virginity is a virtue... But what should one say according to the Philosopher? Some say that virginity according to the Philosopher is not a virtue, because virginity is the complete abstinence from all venereal acts, and therefore, as they say, it pertains to insensibility, i.e. that somebody does not incline whatsoever towards

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quare etc. Maior patet per Philosophum ex diffinitione uirtutis in II huius. Minor patet: quia uirgo nulla delectatione uenerea utitur, et ideo consistit in extremo"; *ad rationem*: "Cum dicitur: uirtus consistit in medio, verum est: in medio secundum rationem et non secundum rem. Et cum dicitur: uirginitas non est in medio sed in extremo, dico quod est in extremo secundum rem, est tamen in medio secundum rationem, quia per uirginitatem aliquis abstinet a delectationibus uenereis secundum quod oportet et ut oportet, ut possit contemplationi veritatis uacare".

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.: "... naturale est unicuique delectari in illis per que sustentatur sua uita; modo insensibilitas facit aliquem non delectari in eo per quod uita humana sustentari debet, sicut in cibo et potu... ergo insensibilitas est uitium contrarium nature... Verumptamen est notandum quod si aliquis delectationes uehementes que rationis iudicium impediunt uelut fugere, non dicitur propter hoc insensibilis nec erit uitiosus; quia tales delectationes uehementes oportet fugere... Ille habitus per quem aliquis abstinet ab operationibus turpis et peruersis secundum quod oportet est uirtus; modo uirginitas est habitus per quem aliquis aspernatur turpes operationes circa uenerea: nam ille operationes sunt ualde turpes, sunt enim bestiales et sensuales, nam istud est commune hominibus et brutis; ergo uirginitas est uirtus".

such pleasures. However, this is not the position held by the Philosopher. I say therefore with regard to this question that according to faith and to truth, virginity is a virtue, a position one can also sustain in accordance with the Philosopher.<sup>33</sup>

The first known medieval philosopher to argue that in Aristotle's eyes virginity is a vice was Radulphus's younger colleague from the Paris Faculty of Arts, Bartholomew of Bruges († 1356). He did so in 1309 in his extensive commentary on the pseudo-Aristotelian *Economics*. Although he personally believed that virginity is a virtue, Bartholomew argued that for Aristotle it must have been a vice, and that those who claim the opposite misread his mind:

I believe that, as is manifest from the third book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the Philosopher would say that it is true [that virginity is a vice against nature]. For virginity is opposed to temperance, and a virtue cannot be opposed to another virtue but only to a vice. Furthermore, if total sexual abstinence were a virtue, then sex would be a vice in all circumstances, just like total abstinence from robbery is a good and consequently any sort of theft, large or small, a vice. Thus, if sex is good, or at least not bad in itself, how can total sexual abstinence be good as well? It is clear that according to Aristotle it cannot... I believe therefore that Aristotle's opinion was that virginity is a moral vice and contrary to nature, and that he would have said that those who claim the opposite are wrong. However, this [Aristotle's position] is erroneous...<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.: "De secunda questione diuerse sunt opinioniones. Sed verum est quod secundum fidem nostram et veritatem habet poni quod uirginitas sit uirtus... Sed quid esset dicendum secundum Philosophum? Aliqui dicunt quod uirginitas secundum Philosophum non est uirtus, quia uirginitas est omnimoda abstinentia ab omnibus actibus ueneris, et ideo, ut dicunt, pertinet ad quandam insensibilitatem, scilicet quod aliquis non inclinatur aliquo modo ad tales delectationes. Verumptamen istud non habetur a Philosopho. Ideo dico ad questionem quod secundum fidem et veritatem, et potest etiam sustineri secundum Philosophum, quod uirginitas est uirtus".

<sup>34</sup> Bartholomew of Bruges, *Quaestiones Yconomice Aristotilis* I q. 6 (Utrum combinatio seu copulatio viri et mulieris sit naturalis), MS Paris, BnF lat. 16089, f. 124<sup>rb-va</sup>: "Credo, quod Philosophus diceret, quod verum est. Et hoc patet aperte tertio Ethicorum. Virginitas enim opponitur temperantie, et uirtus non opponitur uirtuti sed uitio. Etiam si totaliter abstinere bonum esset, quomodocumque agere esset uitium. Quemadmodum totaliter abstinere a furto est bonum. Et ideo, quocumque modo factum, siue secundum plus, siue secundum minus, est uitium. Etiam si actus commixtionis carnalis sit bonus, uel non sit malus secundum se, quomodo totaliter abstinere erit bonum? Manifestum est, quod nullo modo secundum Philosophum... Et ideo credo, quod mens Philosophi fuit, quod uirginitas sit uitium in moribus et contra naturam, et quod diceret, quod qui dicunt contrarium peccant. Verumptamen hoc est erroneum...". See Blažek, *Die mittelalterliche Rezeption*, 199–384, esp. 330–332.

As Bartholomew is known to have engaged in philosophical discussion with Radulphus Brito on another occasion,<sup>35</sup> it is not impossible that his polemic against the traditional *pia interpretatio* of Aristotle's concept of insensibility was also directed specifically against his older colleague.

*Giles of Orléans, the Erlangen and Erfurt  
commentaries, and John of Tytynsale*

The *Ethics* commentary by Giles of Orléans, likewise dating from around 1300, is obviously related to that of Radulphus. He agrees that in itself the total avoidance of sensual, and hence also sexual, pleasures and their related actions is a vice contrary to the order of nature. At the same time, drawing on the solution to the Aristotelian challenge formulated already by Thomas Aquinas, he emphasizes that to abstain from such pleasures in order to achieve something great (*propter aliquid magnum*) does not fall under insensibility, because such abstinence entirely conforms to the dictates of right reason. As examples of such "legitimate" abstinence the Parisian Arts Master mentions the case of soldiers, but also the case of "those dedicated to contemplation".<sup>36</sup>

The most noticeable contribution of the commentary to the discussion of virginity consists in an interesting reflection which to a certain extent undermines the traditional notion, emphasized for instance by Thomas, of sex being an impediment to the use of reason. Countering the argument that insensibility cannot be a vice because it is ordered towards the *bonum rationis*, Giles argues that the complete avoidance of sensual pleasures cannot be seen as promoting the good of rea-

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<sup>35</sup> See Heinrich Roos, "Die Kontroverse zwischen Bartholomaeus von Brügge und Radulphus Brito über die Frage: Utrum genus possit salvari in una specie", in *Sapientiae procerum amore: Mélanges médiévistes offerts à dom Jean-Pierre Müller O.S.B. à l'occasion de son 70ème anniversaire*, ed. Theodor W. Köhler (Rome, 1974), 323–342.

<sup>36</sup> Giles of Orléans, *Questiones in Ethicam* 3, MS Paris, BnF lat. 16089, f. 209<sup>ra</sup>: "Dico, quod insensibilitas est viciū, quia omne illud, quod contrariatur ordini nature est vitium in moribus. Insensibilitas est huius... Notandum tamen, quod abstinere a delectationibus tactus que secundum se considerate sunt necessarie ad uite conseruationem propter aliquid magnum non pertinet ad insensibilitatem cum hoc sit secundum dictamen rationis recte. Unde aliquando videmus quod aliqui videntur abstinere ab delectationibus tactus propter aliquod magnum, sicut milites. Propter hoc enim dediti contemplationi, ut melius possint adspici bonum contemplationis (abstinent ab istis delectationibus) non abstinentes de illis vituperabiliter".



son. Since reason is dependent on the senses and bodily organs, the complete refusal of pleasurable acts necessary for the maintenance of human life does not enhance reason, but rather destroys it.<sup>37</sup> Giles does not conclude from this that virginity is not appropriate to a life of scholarship and contemplation, but rushes to the traditional position that these activities are best practiced in a life of sexual abstinence.<sup>38</sup> His reflection nonetheless illustrates the growing impact of Aristotle's positive notion of pleasure on the discussion of virginity.

Very similar accounts to that of Giles can be found in three other *Ethics* commentaries from about 1300: the so-called Erlangen and Erfurt commentaries and the commentary by John of Tytynsale. The Erfurt commentary actually reads as a simple rephrasing of Giles's *quaestio*. The other two commentaries contain some minor additions worthy of mention here: they cite the pursuit of health as a further legitimate and rational motive for sexual and other sensual abstinence, and they advance the abstinent lifestyle of athletes as an example of "legitimate" insensibility besides the lives of scholars and soldiers.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 208<sup>rb</sup>: "Arguitur quod non [sc. quod insensibilitas non sit peccatum in moribus], quia illud per quod promouitur bonum hominis non videtur esse peccatum. Per insensibilitatem et actum ipsius promouitur bonum hominis, ideo et cetera. Maior patet, minor declaratur, quia bonum hominis est bonum secundum rationem, que est virtus suprema in ipso. Sed illud promouitur per insensibilitatem, quia per hoc quod est abstinere a delectationibus tactus, est bonum rationis. Sed per insensibilitatem abstinere homo a delectationibus tactus, ergo per ipsam promouitur bonum rationis"; *ibid.*, f. 209<sup>va</sup>: "Ad rationes. Conceditur primo: Per quod promouitur, et cetera. Dico quod verum est. Et conceditur: Per insensibilitatem et cetera. Falsum est. Et cum probatur, quod per insensibilitatem, et cetera, dico quod ad insensibilitatem pertinet penitus abstinere ab omnibus operationibus tactus et operationibus necessariis ad vitam. Si autem aliqui abstinent a talibus, per talem abstinentiam non promouetur bonum rationis, immo corrumpitur, quia ratio in operatione sua utitur ipsis sensibus. Sensus autem non est sine organo corporis. Organa autem siue salus organorum non conseruantur sine operationibus necessariis ad vitam. Ergo a ipso nec ratio conseruatur nec bonum eius promouitur sine ipsis. Et ideo insensibilitas magis corrumpit ipsum quam promoueat".

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 209<sup>va</sup>: "Notandum tamen quod secundum quod opus secundum rationem cui aliquis insistit requirit minus vires corporales, sic ille qui insistit tali operationi minus requirit delectationes tales. Et ideo dantes se studio et actibus contemplationis, cum tales actus, quibus insistent, minus requirunt delectationes corporales quam alii actus, sicut actus generationis et alii huius, ideo contemplantes veritati minus insistent circa delectationes tactus quam alii, quia ille delectationes contemplationem impediunt..."

<sup>39</sup> *Questiones in Ethicam* 3 q. 66, MS Erfurt, SB Amplon. F 13, f. 99<sup>vb</sup>: "Consequenter queritur utrum insensibilitas sit peccatum in moribus. Videtur quod non, quia illud per quod promouitur bonum rationis, non videtur esse peccatum in moribus. Sed per insensibilitatem promouitur bonum rationis, quia bonum rationis est bonum hominis secundum rationem. Sed istud bonum maxime videtur promouere per insensibilitatem,

*Henry of Friemar and Guido Terreni*

The next medieval *Ethics* commentary to discuss virginity is that of the Augustinian friar Henry of Friemar, written in Paris in 1310.<sup>40</sup> The commentary combines a literal exposition of the Aristotelian text with *quaestiones*. While Henry's assessment of virginity in the *sententia* closely follows Aquinas's *Sententia libri Ethicorum*, his *quaestio* on insensibility is heavily indebted to Giles of Orléans, the Erlangen and Erfurt commentaries, and John of Tytynsale.<sup>41</sup>

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quia illud bonum promouet abstinentia delectationum tactus..."; *solutio*: "Est tamen aduertendum, quod abstinere a delectationibus tactus, que secundum se considerate neccessarie essent ad vitam, abstinere ab illis propter aliquod magnum bonum, non est vicium in moribus cum istud fiat secundum rectam rationem. Unde aliquando videmus aliquos non vituperabiliter abstinere ab hiis propter bonum aliquod magnum, ut milites propter victoriam et viros contemplationi deditos veritatis ut melius possint contemplari et operationibus veritatis contemplationis intendere, in quibus consistit maximum bonum. Et ideo cum sic fit abstinentia a talibus, illud non est vicium in moribus"; *Questiones in Ethicam* 3 q. 26, Erlangen, UB 213, f. 59<sup>vb</sup>: "Consequenter queritur de viciis oppositis, utrum insensibilitas sit vicium. Arguitur quod non, quia insensibilitas est qua aliquis abstinere ab aliquibus delectationibus tactus, sed hoc non est vicium. Probatio: quia illud secundum quod promouitur bonum hominis non est vicium. Sed per abstinere ab omnibus delectationibus tactus promouet bonum hominis, quod probatur, quia bonum hominis est bonum rationis. Sed per talem abstinentiam promouitur bonum rationis in homine..."; *solutio*: "Sciendum tamen quod abstinere ab aliquibus in aliquo casu non est vicium. Sicut cum aliquis abstinere ab aliquibus propter salutem conseruandam, sicut etiam athlete... Unde contemplantibus in philosophia oportet abstinere a multis delectationibus et talis abstinentia, que est propter contemplare non est vicium quia mouitur secundum finem bonum"; John of Tytynsale, *Quaestiones libri Ethicorum* 3 q. 49, MS Durham, Cathedral Library C.IV.20, ff. 241<sup>vb</sup>-242<sup>rb</sup>: "Consequenter queritur utrum insensibilitas sit vicium. Et videtur quod non. Nam homines dicuntur insensibiles eo quod non delectantur secundum delectationes tactus. Sed abstinere a talibus delectationibus est virtuosum et laudabile, ut patet de abstinentia et virginitate, ergo et cetera"; *solutio*: "Intelligendum tamen est, quod aliquis potest delectationes fugere propter bonum finem ut propter sanitatem consequendam vel ut liberius operationes suas magis exercet, ut milites et athletes oportet a delectationibus abstinere, ut melius possint pugnare. Et similiter est de studiosis et aliis. Isti deficiunt a delectationibus, nec autem sunt viciosi, quia hoc non faciunt preter rationem".

<sup>40</sup> See Clemens Stroick, *Heinrich von Friemar: Leben, Werke, philosophisch-theologische Stellung in der Scholastik* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1954), 53-59. An abridged version of his commentary is found in MS Prague, NK III.C.20, ff. 1<sup>r</sup>-265<sup>v</sup>, with a false attribution to Walter Burley.

<sup>41</sup> Henry of Friemar, *Sententia totius libri Ethicorum*, MS Erlangen, UB 212, f. 80<sup>vb</sup>-81<sup>ra</sup>: "Dubitaret forte aliquis utrum insensibilitas sit vicium oppositum temperantie. Et videtur quod non. Nam homines dicuntur insensibiles eo quod deficiunt circa delectationes tactus. Sed abstinere a talibus delectationibus videtur esse laudabile et virtuosum, ut patet de virginitate et abstinentia. Ergo insensibilitas non est pecca-

Henry's personal contribution to the virginity discussion is contained in the *sententia*. In addition to Thomas's example of soldiers abstaining from sexual intercourse for the sake of warfare, Henry mentions the ancient philosopher Democritus who "abstained from every venereal pleasure to be more free for contemplation".<sup>42</sup> It is worth noting that according to the anonymous *Liber de vita et moribus philosophorum*, a set of biographies of ancient philosophers written before 1326 and once ascribed to Walter Burley, Democritus blinded himself so as not to be tempted by women.<sup>43</sup>

The Carmelite friar Guido Terreni likewise composed his commentary on Aristotle's *Ethics* in the early fourteenth century, probably before 1318 when he became Master General of his order.<sup>44</sup> As in earlier commentaries, the bulk of his discussion of virginity is devoted to an explanation as to why virginity does not constitute the vice of insensibility. He argues that virginity does not fall under insensibility, because the pleasures it avoids, i.e. sexual pleasures, are—unlike pleasures of

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tum"; *solutio*: "Est tamen intelligendum preter argumenta, quod aliquis quandoque potest huius delectationes fugere propter bonum finem, puta propter quamdam sanitatem vel ut promptius suas operationes exercent, sicut milites et atelete a multis delectationibus abstinere cibi et potus ut sint habiliores ad pugnandum. Et similiter etiam studiosi ab huius se retrahunt gratia contemplande veritatis. Unde isti licet ab huius delectationibus deficiant, non tamen sunt viciosi, quia hoc non faciunt preter rectam rationem". These passages are almost identical with the above cited passages in John of Tytynsale's commentary; this, however, does not apply to the entire question.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 36<sup>ra-1b</sup>: "... ex predictis sufficienter ostensum est quod *temperantia et fortitudo corrumpitur ex superhabundancia et defectu, saluatur autem a medietate*, que medietas quidem non accipitur secundum quantitatem delectationis, sed secundum rationem rectam. Ex quo manifeste eliditur error illorum qui dicunt quod virginitas sit vicium, eo quod abstinere ab omni delectatione venerea, quod est falsum propter duo: primo quia Philosophus dicit illum agrestem, qui preter rationem ab omnibus humanis delectationibus generaliter abstinere. Virginitas autem non abstinere ab omnibus delectationibus humanis, sed solum a venereis. Secundo quia nec ab illis abstinere nisi secundum rationem rectam. Sic autem abstinere non est viciosum, sicut patet in Democrito, qui ab omni venerea delectatione se cohibuit, ut liberius contemplationi vacaret, sicut milites virtuosus et fortes actibus venereis delectationibus se cohibent, ut magis strenue vacent rebus bellicis".

<sup>43</sup> Pseudo-Walter Burley, *De vita et moribus philosophorum*, ed. Hermann Knust (Tübingen, 1886), p. 178: "Tertullianus autem dicit quod ideo excecavit se ipsum [= Democritus] quia mulieres sine concupiscentia videre non poterat"; see also Mario Grignaschi, "Lo pseudo-Walter Burley e il *Liber de vita et moribus philosophorum*", *Medioevo* 16 (1990), 131–190.

<sup>44</sup> See Bartolomeu Xiberta, *Guu Terrena: Carmelita de Perpinyà* (Barcelona, 1932), 10–13, 47–50.

food—not immediately necessary for the survival of the individual, even though they may be necessary for the survival of the human species. Terreni admits that his argument applies only *in tempore praesenti*, with mankind having proliferated enough and with a sufficient number of people willing to procreate. He suggests thereby that if the survival of the human species would be endangered, virginity would indeed fall under insensibility.<sup>45</sup> He makes the same restriction in his second argument, which presents a variation on the traditional idea that virginity must be a virtue because it enables contemplation and speculation. Here too he stresses that this argument applies only under the condition that there are enough other people willing to perpetuate the human species.<sup>46</sup>

It ought to be mentioned that the commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* is not the only work in which Terreni discusses the virtuous character of virginity. He also deals with it in his theological quodlibeta, albeit not in relation to Aristotle's doctrine of insensibility, but only vis-

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<sup>45</sup> Guido Terreni, *Quaestiones super libros Ethicorum 3 (Utrum temperantia sit virtus)*, MS Bologna, BU 1625, f. 40<sup>vb</sup>: “Sed delectationes communes saltem sunt necessarie ad vitam. Ergo deficientes a delectationibus satis necessariis et ab hiis, sine quibus humana vita saluari non potest ut insensibiles peccant. Maior patet. Minor probatur, quia delectatio est necessaria et ingenita a natura operationi tactus propter sustentationem vite. Unde aliqui ex hoc moti voluerint quod virginitas, que excludit omnem delectationem veneream non esset virtus. Sed hoc est falsum presenti tempore, quo indiuidua humane speciei satis (*MS*: sic) sunt multiplicati et homines sufficientes sunt, qui actum generationis exercent, quod non est periculum, quin satis humana species saluetur. Nam aliud est de delectatione cibi, sine qua non potest sustentari homo et aliud de delectatione venerea, que non ordinatur ad delectantis sustentationem, sed ad prolis procreationem ad saluationem humane speciei. Unde mihi non est tante necessitatis delectatio venerea sicut delectatio cibi, quia sine delectatione cibi possum minime sustentari, possum tamen sine delectatione venerea. Et sine mea delectatione venerea potest humana species sustentari, tantum multi ad eam satis ardent”.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 40<sup>vb</sup>–41<sup>ra</sup>: “Et ideo virginitas est virtus. Nam habitus disponens (*MS*: vestenans) appetitum sensitium in ordine ad optimum rationis est bonus et laudabilis, quia ad hoc principaliter sunt boni habitus morales, ut disponant appetitum sensitium ad bonum rationis salua consistentia nature et speciei humane. Sed virginitas (*MS*: virtutes) est habitus modificans passiones appetitus sensitui, sic quod serenatus intellectus magis potest in contemplatione et speculatione, que est optima operatio intellectus, ad quam totus homo precipue ordinatur. Nec per hoc impeditur consistentia hominis, et ut supponitur, humana species sine eo per alios sufficienter saluatur. Ergo est virtus”; *ibid.*, f. 41<sup>rb</sup>: “Ad rationes. Ad primam dicendum quod temperantia est medium circa excessum et defectum delectationum. Virginitas autem non deficit omnino a delectationibus, quia utitur delectationibus cibi et eorum que necessaria sunt ad consistentiam indiuidui. Unde non est insensibilitas. Delectationes autem venereas non excludit nisi ut ratio dicat, scilicet propter bonum contemplationis. Et ideo non excedit medium rationis, quod est medium in virtute et non medium rei”.

à-vis alleged biblical challenges to this virtue, such as the precept to *Increase and multiply* (Gen. 1: 22).<sup>47</sup>

*Gerald of Odo and John Buridan*

The Franciscan friar Gerald of Odo (†1349) probably composed his *Ethics Commentary* in Paris before his being elected Master General of his order in 1329. Conforming to tradition, Gerald argues that virginity is a moral virtue distinct from temperance, perfectly consisting in the mean and not falling under the vicious extreme of insensibility. His explanation contains traditional as well as original elements. Like his predecessors, Gerald emphasizes that virginity consists of rationally motivated sexual abstinence which enables contemplation (being primarily a theologian, Gerald speaks here of spiritual or religious contemplation rather than philosophical speculation). But he provides a new definition as to what the mean of virginity actually consists of. Being situated between the extremes of breaking one's "bodily integrity" needlessly and refusing to break it when necessity requires it, virginity consists in refusing to break one's bodily integrity when there is no necessity to do so.<sup>48</sup>

Gerald refers to virginity also elsewhere in his commentary, when discussing the connection of the virtues. Gerald limits this connection to the four cardinal virtues, which in his view are essential for moral goodness. Virginity is only a secondary virtue; in Gerald's view, human beings can be morally good without practicing virginity.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Guido Terreni, *Quodlibeta* 4 q. 15 (*Utrum autem virginitas sit virtus*), MS Vatican City, BAV Borg. lat. 39, ff. 192<sup>rb</sup>–193<sup>rb</sup>.

<sup>48</sup> Gerald of Odo, *Sententia super libros Ethicorum* 4 q. 14 (*Utrum virginitas sit moralis virtus tanquam species temperancie et castitatis*), f. 67<sup>rb-va</sup>: "Et secundum hoc ad questionem dicenda sunt quinque: Primum quod integritas corporis est conditio nobilis. Secundum quod ipsa non est virtus moralis. Tertium quod habitus electivius illius integritatis est virtus moralis. Quartum quod est virtus distincta simpliciter a viduali castitate. Quintum quod non distinguitur ab ea magnitudine et paruitate sicut magnificentia a liberalitate... Tertium probatur, primo quia omnis habitus electivius medietatis includentis decentiam et decorem determinate secundum rectam rationem est virtus moralis, ut habetur ex diffinitione moralis virtutis supra libro secundo. Sed iste habitus virginalis electivius prefate integritatis est huiusmodi, quare est virtus moralis. Quod autem memorata integritas electa secundum istum habitum sit quedam medietas moraliter sumpta patet, quia velle frangere illam integritatem absque necessitate et nolle frangere pro necessitate sunt duo extrema inter que mediat nolle frangere sine necessitate. Et hoc modo virginalis habitus est electivius huius integritatis et non aliter".

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* 6 q. 17, f. 138<sup>ra-rb</sup>: "... duo sunt genera virtutum moralium. Quedam enim

The Parisian Arts Master John Buridan may have worked on his highly influential *Ethics* commentary over the last two decades of his life, between roughly 1340 and 1360.<sup>50</sup> His question *Utrum virginitas sit virtus vel vicium* contains a strikingly non-conformist account of virginity. While all previous commentators attempted to defend the virtuous character of virginity and philosophical celibacy against the Aristotelian challenge, Buridan takes an entirely opposite view. Even though he mentions the Aristotelian challenge to virginity only in passing,<sup>51</sup> he does not defend virginity against Aristotle but seems to subscribe to the Stagirite's alleged condemnation of it.

As James Walsh already noted, the question is related to the discussion of virginity in Gerald of Odo's commentary.<sup>52</sup> In fact, it reads as a reply to it. Gerald's positioning of virginity between breaking one's "bodily integrity" without necessity and refusing to break it when necessity requires it suggests that in time of necessity virginity might not be a virtue. Buridan refuses to accept this view, arguing that a fully-fledged moral virtue must remain a virtue at all times and everywhere, irrespective of historical and personal circumstances.<sup>53</sup> What is far more, he declares—in sharp contrast to Gerald—that virginity (except in a few, very limited, cases) is not virtuous at all, and that it is not recommendable even for philosophers. If virginity were a fully-fledged moral virtue, then a virginal life would be required of everybody without exception. But how, Buridan asks, could it be recommendable for somebody like the King of France to lead a virginal life?

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sunt de essentia principalis bonitatis humane, quedam autem non. ille namque sunt de essentia, sine quibus non est possibile hominem principaliter esse bonum, cuiusmodi sunt virtutes cardinales... Virtutes autem que non sunt de essentia talis bonitatis sunt ille, sine quibus homo potest principaliter esse bonus... puta ut virginitas...".

<sup>50</sup> See Bernd Michael, "Johannes Buridan: Studien zu seinem Leben, seinen Werken und zur Rezeption seiner Theorien im Europa des späten Mittelalters" (inaug. diss. Freie Universität Berlin, 1985), 826–882.

<sup>51</sup> John Buridan, [*Questiones*] *super libros Ethicorum* 3 q. 30 (Paris, 1513; repr. Frankfurt am Main, 1968), f. 67<sup>va</sup>: "Item, virtus consistit in medio, virginitas autem non, sed in extremo, scilicet in abdicatione omnis venerei actus non solum quando oportet et ubi, sed ubique et semper".

<sup>52</sup> James J. Walsh, "Some Relationships Between Gerald of Odo's and John Buridan's Commentaries on Aristotle's *Ethics*", *Franciscan Studies* 35 (1975), 238–241.

<sup>53</sup> John Buridan, *Super libros Ethicorum* 3 q. 30, f. 68<sup>va</sup>: "Contra terciam conclusionem sic obicitur. Omnis habitus qui secundum eius propriam rationem est virtus, semper in quocumque et quandocumque inveniatur erit virtus. Sed illi concedunt quod tempore necessitatis virginitas non esset virtus, ergo ipsa secundum se non est virtus".

If one reflects on it accurately, how could it be morally expedient, if the King of France, a perfect and potent man, able to generate perfect offspring, would permanently abstain from sexual intercourse—especially in the case a wicked tyrant were likely to succeed him if he died without progeny?<sup>54</sup>

Although refusing to grant to virginity the status of an independent virtue, Buridan admits that complete sexual abstinence can in some very limited cases be a part of the virtue of temperance. According to him this applies to those people for whom it would not be reasonable to have sex and children for economic or health reasons, such as lepers and paupers:

One nonetheless has to concede that virginity can go with the virtue of temperance. The reason is that for some imperfect people it may be reasonable, expedient, and decorous to abstain all their life from sex. This for instance applies to lepers, in order to prevent further contamination or the generation of decayed offspring. It also applies to paupers, who could not sufficiently nourish their children, and also to the ill, for whom having sex would be harmful to their health and who would be likely to generate orphans and cripples. If such people abstain all their life from sexual intercourse, they act with regard to sexual pleasures as they ought, and that is precisely what temperance consists of.<sup>55</sup>

Complete sexual abstinence may thus be virtuous in the case of lepers and paupers, but definitely cannot be recommended for philosophers. Contrary to the prevailing ideal of philosophical celibacy, Buridan maintains that a moderate sexual life best suits the *vita philosophica*. The best example, he argues, is Aristotle himself:

As for the argument that virginal abstinence is good for a life of philosophy and for the practice of virtue, natural philosophers would say that it is rather moderate abstinence. After all, Aristotle himself, the king of Philosophers, had a wife and children. For natural philosophers hold that

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.: “Iterum sistendo precise in humana ratione, quomodo expediret secundum mores (si) rex Francie, vir perfectus et potens in prolem perfectam abstinueret a venereis omni tempore, specialiter illo casu quo verisimile esset tyrannum pessimum sibi succedere si decederet sine prole”. The translation is mine.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.: “Debet tamen concedi, quod cum virginitate stare potest virtus temperantie, quoniam aliquibus imperfectis personis secundum rectam rationem expediret et deceret per totam vitam a venereis abstinere, verbi gratia leprosis, ut non inficerent sanos, aut ne prolem putridam generarent. Et egenis qui non possent sufficienter nutrire prolem, aut egrotatiis quorum obsesset coitus sanitati, et de quibus esset verisimile quod non possent habere prolem nisi diminutam et orbatam. Tales igitur, si per totam vitam a venereis abstinere se haberent circa venerea ut oportet, quod pertinet ad temperantiam”.

moderate sex is good for health and for a good bodily disposition, and souls follow their bodies, as is said in the *Physiognomics*.<sup>56</sup>

How to explain Buridan's unorthodox account of virginity? I would like to conjecture that his *quaestio* is written with an ironic and satirical undertone. As already mentioned, the question was a reaction to Gerald of Odo's discussion of virginity. Challenging Gerald's theologizing approach, Buridan may have construed instead a kind of philosophical satire (he emphasizes at the outset that he will argue solely on the grounds of human reason)<sup>57</sup> in which he deliberately pushes *ad absurdum* the defense of sexual pleasure proposed by "the king of Philosophers".

It seems that for Buridan's "serious" opinions on virginity one has to look elsewhere in his commentary, notably to his *quaestio Utrum magnificentia sit virtus* in book 4. Buridan discusses here the virtue of magnificence and its relation to the virtue of liberality, using as his point of comparison the relation of virginity to temperance and the relation of braveness in war to fortitude. In contrast to his previous denigration of virginity and his limitation of virginity's being a virtue of temperance to the extreme cases of lepers and paupers, he holds here virginity to be the superlative form of temperance, in the same way as magnificence is a superlative form of liberality and military braveness a superlative form of fortitude. Moreover he argues, following Gerald on this point, that neither virginity nor the other superlative virtues are necessary to human goodness. Not everybody ought to practice virginity, go to war, or magnificently spend great amounts of money. He insists however that every truly good person would lead a virginal life if circumstances required and allowed for it.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., f. 68<sup>vb</sup>: "Quando etiam dicitur quod virginalis abstinentia valet ad vacandum philosophie in operibus virtutum, dicerent naturales quod non, sed ad hoc valet abstinentia moderata. Aristoteles enim princeps philosophorum uxorem habuit et prolem. Et naturales dicunt quod coitus moderatus confert ad sanitatem et ad corporis bonam dispositionem, et anime sequuntur corpora ut dicitur in *De phisionomia*".

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., f. 68<sup>rb</sup>: "... circumscriptis omnibus legalibus aut fidei documentis que non ex humana ratione...".

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. 4 q. 7, f. 77<sup>rb-va</sup>: "Similiter virginitas (*ed.*: temperantia) non est solum circa totalem abstinentiam ab actibus venereis sed tamen electio continuata totalis abstinentie ab actibus venereis in quibus et quando et ubi fuerit oportunum et sic de aliis circumstantiis, et forte maximus actus temperantie. Propter quod illo casu virginitas ponitur esse virtus. Posset ergo dici quod magnificentia se habet ad liberalitatem sicut fortitudo contracta per applicationem eius ad pericula mortis in bello se habet ad fortitudinem simpliciter et communiter acceptam. Et sic temperantia contracta ad virginitatem se habet ad temperantiam simpliciter. Unde sicut non decet quemlibet ad bellum ire, nec quemlibet esse virginem, ita nec decet quemlibet esse magnificum.



*Conclusion*

The discussion of the virtue of virginity in medieval commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics* provides a significant example of the kind of challenges Aristotle's work posed to the beliefs and values of its medieval readers. In the opinion of those readers, Aristotle's concept of insensibility called into question the Christian virginal ideal as well as its medieval philosophical variation, the ideal of philosophical celibacy.

Thomas Aquinas, the first commentator to take up the challenge, argued that virginity is different from the vice of insensibility because it involves abstinence not from all, but only from sexual pleasures. This abstinence occurs not against, but in accordance with, right reason, since sexual pleasures have a disturbing effect on one's rational powers. Avoiding allusions to theology and Christian religion, Thomas did not associate in his commentary celibacy with the clerical or the contemplative life, but with the life of soldiers and merchants.

The arguments of Aquinas reappear in several other commentaries written in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, sometimes with interesting additions. Thus James of Douai (?) tried to meet Aristotle's alleged challenge to virginity on exegetical grounds, too: in his view, the conclusion that virginity is a vice was nowhere implied by the Aristotelian text. Moreover, he reintroduced the ideal of philosophical celibacy into the discussion of virginity. In the commentaries of Radulphus Brito and Guido Terreni we find a distinction between pleasures related to the necessities of life, such as food and drink, and the unnecessary or harmful pleasures of sex, which ought to be avoided, at least as long as the survival of the human species is not threatened.

New perspectives were opened in the commentaries of Gerald of Odo and John Buridan. Gerald understood virginity as an independent moral virtue between the extremes of sexual indulgence and the refusal to have sex in case this would be necessary. The latter view was rejected by Buridan who saw in virginity not a separate moral virtue but only a part of the virtue of temperance. It has been suggested in this article that Buridan's polemic against Gerald, in which he limited virginity's being an expression of temperance to cases of extreme poverty and ill

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Ita tamen intelligendo, quod ille non esset simpliciter et perfecte temperatus qui non eligeret totalem abstinentiam, si videret hoc oportere attentis circumstantiis et oppositum non oporteret, nec ille esset liberalis qui non eligeret expensas magnas si videret oportere et oppositum non oportere...". See also István Bejczy's article in this volume.

health, was satirical in character, and that his true opinion on virginity as the superlative form of temperance is to be sought elsewhere in his commentary.

Taken as a whole, the discussion on virginity in commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics* from about 1250 to about 1350 took the character of a philosophical defence, against the Aristotelian challenge, of the virtuous nature of virginity. In several commentaries, especially those issued from the Parisian Faculty of Arts, it read moreover as an apology of philosophical celibacy. Even though references to Christian ideals occasionally arose in the commentaries, their authors generally strove to save the medieval ideal of virginity by purely philosophical means.



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THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY



TEACHING ETHICS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF  
VIENNA: THE MAKING OF A COMMENTARY AT  
THE FACULTY OF ARTS (A CASE STUDY)

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“Die einzigen Gipfelgespräche, die wirklich  
einen Sinn haben, sind die der Alpinisten”

(Luis Trenker)

1. *Introduction*

Ethics at the University of Vienna, as in other European universities of the fifteenth century, belonged to the compulsory subjects for a master's degree in the Faculty of Arts. Teaching ethics meant holding lectures and disputing questions on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. As a result of efforts by bachelors who took notes in class and “reported”, as they called it, the oral teaching, a great many manuscripts with Viennese commentaries on the *Ethics* survive. At present we can point to 21 manuscripts with commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics* that definitely originated at the University of Vienna; 5 more manuscripts contain commentaries that were probably written there, too.<sup>1</sup> This number of manuscripts dating from the same century, originating from the same university, and pertaining to the same textbook is unmatched, as far as I know, in the abundant tradition of medieval commentaries on Aristotle's works.

In a recent article on the teaching of ethics at the University of Vienna, I studied the surviving Viennese commentaries on Aristotle's *Ethics* in comparison with the legal framework set out in the Statutes

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<sup>1</sup> For a list of these manuscripts see Christoph Flüeler, “Ethica in Wien anno 1438: Die Kommentare der aristotelischen ‘Ethik’ an der Wiener Artistenfakultät”, in *Schriften*

(1389) and the acts (1385–1497) of the Faculty of Arts.<sup>2</sup> The leading questions were whether these commentaries follow the Statutes and the decisions made in Faculty assemblies, and whether they yield new insights into the teaching methods of the Arts Faculty. In particular, the study investigated the students' practice of recording lectures and disputations, thereby preserving the oral teaching in the classroom. In this article I would like to build on the earlier research by means of a case study focusing on one particular question from the surviving commentaries: whether magnanimity is a virtue (*utrum magnanimitas sit virtus moralis*). Every master who lectured on the *Ethics* at the Faculty of Arts in Vienna treated this question, usually as the eleventh question of the fourth book. The aim of this study is to reconstruct the classroom practice of the ordinary lectures as well as the so-called private exercises and thus to answer some questions raised at the end of my previous article.

2. *Teaching ethics at the University of Vienna  
in the first half of the fifteenth century*

Every academic year the University of Vienna offered courses on the *Ethics*; often several masters lectured simultaneously on the subject.<sup>3</sup> Following the Statutes of 1389, courses and textbooks were assigned to the teaching masters at the faculty meeting on Saint Giles's day (1 September). The dean personally recorded the names of all teaching masters and the books on which they were supposed to lecture. These records are exceptional for their detail and completeness, in contrast to the fragmentary sources which remain from other universities of

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*im Umkreis mitteleuropäischer Universitäten um 1400: Lateinische und volkssprachige Texte aus Prag, Wien und Heidelberg: Unterschiede, Gemeinsamkeiten, Wechselbeziehungen*, ed. Fritz P. Knapp, Jürgen Miethke, and Manuela Niesner (Leiden, 2004), 123–134. Several additions and specifications are made by Sigrid Müller, “Wiener Ethikkomentare des 15. Jahrhunderts”, *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 17 (2006), 445–467.

<sup>2</sup> Flüeler “Ethica in Wien”. Müller, “Wiener Ethikkomentare”, gives many new insights, especially concerning the second half of the century. The Statutes have been published several times; I used the edition of Alphons Lhotsky, *Die Wiener Artistenfakultät, 1365–1497* (Vienna, 1965), 223–262. The acts from 1385 to 1416 have been published in *Acta facultatis artium universitatis Vindobonensis 1385–1416*, ed. Paul Uiblein (Graz etc., 1968). I studied the remaining, unpublished acts in MSS Vienna, Archiv der Universität Wien, AFA II (covering the period 1416–1447) and AFA III (1447–1497).

<sup>3</sup> The *magistri regentes* outnumbered the ordinary books available for teaching. Four masters taught on the *Ethics* in 1448, 1455, 1460, and 1461; five in 1450, 1452, 1465, and 1466; six in 1476; and even eight in 1463. See Flüeler, “Ethica in Wien”, 103.

the same period. Between 1400 and 1450 the permission to read the *Nicomachean Ethics* (generally referred to as *Ethicorum* or *libri Ethicorum* in the acts of the Faculty) was granted 83 times; 31 masters lectured only on a single book, but the majority (52) received permission to teach a full course, consisting of 143 lectures. The lectures were devoted to John Buridan's commentary on the *Ethics*; the first lecture discussed his prologue, the others covered Buridan's 142 questions on Aristotle's first six books.<sup>4</sup> Masters lectured four times a week, from the day after Saint Coloman (14 October) to 11 July, or even after that date; the master was obliged to finish his programme even if he interrupted his lessons because of illness, cold weather, or examinations of a great number of students. The bachelors paid for the full course and had to swear that they had attended all of the lessons when they took their exams.

Because the *Nicomachean Ethics* was one of the most important books in the curriculum of a bachelor, the Statutes stipulate that in addition to the lectures (*lectiones*), bachelors had to dispute "without exposing themselves to ridicule" Buridan's 120 questions on the first five books.<sup>5</sup> The disputations provided the opportunity to discuss arguments or doubts which had been raised during the lectures. The lectures, then, chronologically preceded the corresponding exercises.<sup>6</sup> The disputations were called *exercitia* in Vienna as well as in other Central European universities. Every week the masters held four disputations or exercises with their bachelors in private rooms at times that did not overlap with those of other university lectures and disputations. As a rule, the exercises took more time than the lectures; exercises lasting one and a half hours, two hours, or even longer, were not unusual. The ethics course was the most expensive one offered in the Faculty; the Statutes of 1389 prescribe a payment of 12 *grossi* for the lectures on the *Ethics* and 24 *grossi* for the exercises.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> In the period 1390–1459 several masters lectured on the last books of the *Ethics*, e.g. Erhardus de Gersten (1430: "ultimos quatuor libros Ethicorum"), Andreas of Weitra (1432: "quattuor libros Ethicorum", and 1437: "ultimos quatuor libros Ethicorum"), Iacobus de Wuldorsdorf (1451: "tres ultimos libros Ethicorum"), and Georgius de Giengn (1452: "tres libros ultimos Ethicorum").

<sup>5</sup> However, MS Munich, BSB clm 7479, covers books VI–X and was written in 1424. Its Viennese origin is probable; see Flüeler, "Ethica in Wien", 130 nr. 23.

<sup>6</sup> At the University of Paris, lectures and disputations were likewise combined in Buridan's time; see Christoph Flüeler, "From Oral Lecture to Written Commentaries: John Buridan's Commentaries on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*", in *Medieval Analyses in Language and Cognition*, ed. Sten Ebbesen and Russell L. Friedman (Copenhagen, 1999), 497–521.

<sup>7</sup> Lhotsky, *Die Wiener Artistenfakultät*, 252–253.



How these regulations were put into practice can be shown by the example of Thomas Wölfel of Wuldersdorf, who taught a full course on the *Ethics* in the academic year 1438–1439. At the faculty meeting of 1 September 1438, presided over by dean Johannes Grössel of Tittmaning, 54 masters asked permission to teach.<sup>8</sup> First the oldest masters were asked what book they intended to lecture on, beginning with Stephan of Eggenberg, who had been teaching for twenty years. Thomas Wölfel came seventh. Having taught for fourteen years,<sup>9</sup> in 1438 he was already a bachelor of theology, but he continued to lecture in the lower faculty for another twenty years. The faculty granted Thomas permission to teach the *Ethics*. Thomas's teaching of the year 1438–1439 is attested by no less than seven student records. Four of these relate to his lectures, three to his exercises:

*Transcripts of Thomas Wölfel's lectures:*

1. *Reportata brevia super II.12–VI libros Ethicorum Aristotelis* (reportatio Wolfgangi), MS Munich, BSB clm 19668 (anno 1439), ff. 68<sup>r</sup>–113<sup>v</sup> (Flüeler, "Ethica in Wien", 126–127, nr. 11)
2. *Lectura librorum Ethicorum I.1–V.22* (reportatio Simonis), MS St. Florian, Stiftsbibliothek XI.636 (anno 1438/39), ff. 316<sup>r</sup>–390<sup>v</sup>

*'Concepta' of Thomas Wölfel's lectures:*

3. *Concepta sex librorum Ethicorum* (reportatio Udalrici), MS Munich, BSB clm 19848 (anno 1439), ff. 4<sup>r</sup>–183<sup>v</sup> (Flüeler, "Ethica in Wien", 126, nr. 10)
4. *Quaestiones abbreviate super quinque libros Ethicorum Aristotelis*, MS Munich, BSB clm 19678 (anno 1439), ff. 5<sup>r</sup>–101<sup>r</sup> (Flüeler, "Ethica in Wien", 127, nr. 12)

<sup>8</sup> For a detailed survey of teaching of this academic year, see Flüeler, "Ethica in Wien", 104–110; for a transcription of the acts recording the meeting, see *ibid.*, 108–109.

<sup>9</sup> Thomas lectured for 33 years at the Faculty of Arts. At the Saint Giles meetings the following books were assigned to him: 1424 *Posteriorum*, 1428 *De anima*, 1429 *Priorum*, 1430 *Posteriorum*, 1431 *De generatione et corruptione*, 1432 *libros De celo et mundo*, 1433 *Veterem artem*, 1435 *Proportiones breves Braguardini*, 1437 *De anima*, 1438 *libros Ethicorum*, 1439 *Parva logicalia*, 1440 *libros Phisicorum*, 1441 *Parva naturalia*, 1442 *libros Ethicorum*, 1443 *De anima*, 1444 *Posteriorum*, 1445 *De anima*, 1448 *libros Posteriorum*, 1449 *dominus reverendus in theologia Magister Thomas licentiatius de Wülderstorff (recepit) libros de celo et mundo*, 1450 *libros Methaphisice*, 1451 *Parva naturalia*, 1452 *Posteriorum*, 1454 *libros De anima*, 1456 *De generatione et corruptione*, 1457 *Parva naturalia*.

*Transcripts of Thomas Wölfel's exercises:*

5. *Exercitia librorum quinque Ethicorum* (reportatio Augustini), MS Munich, BSB clm 19673 (anno 1438/39), ff. 5<sup>r</sup>–254<sup>v</sup> (Flüeler, “Ethica in Wien”, 124–125, nr. 8)
6. *Disputata quinque Ethicorum* (reportatio Simonis), MS St. Florian, Stiftsbibliothek XI.636 (anno 1438/39), ff. 1<sup>r</sup>–302<sup>v</sup> (Flüeler, “Ethica in Wien”, 125–126, nr. 9)
7. *Quaestiones super I–V libros Ethicorum Aristotelis*, MS Vienna, ÖNB 4672 (ca. 1438/50), ff. 1<sup>r</sup>–231<sup>v</sup> (Flüeler, “Ethica in Wien”, 123, nr. 3)

The four manuscripts recording Thomas Wölfel's lectures give evidence of at least three bachelors taking notes independently of each other. Two manuscripts should be considered original student notebooks. The first manuscript contains so-called *breuia* of the lectures on books 2.12 to 6.22 written by Wolfgang of Salzburg. Recently, I was able to find a second original notebook of Wölfel's lectures in the abbey library of St. Florian, written by the bachelor Simon, who attended and transcribed Wölfel's exercises as well.<sup>10</sup> Two other manuscripts contain *concepta* of the lectures. The first of these is on books 1 to 6 and was written *pro parte* by the bachelor Ulrich of Weilheim in the classroom during Wölfel's lecture. The second is a direct copy of the first, except that it lacks book 6.

Transcripts of the exercises survive in three manuscripts. Two manuscripts are original notebooks of two bachelors who attended Thomas's class. The first is that of Augustine of Weilheim, who matriculated in 1435 as a member of the Rhenish nation, became a bachelor in 1437, received the licence in 1440 and shortly after, in the same year, his master's degree. We may infer from these facts that he was around twenty years old when he attended Wölfel's class. Augustine carefully recorded the date at the end of each book, and sometimes even at the end of particular questions.<sup>11</sup> There are all in all eleven notations of a date in this copybook. He transcribed the first question of the second book on 8 January 1439, the last question of this book on Friday 13 February, and the first question of book 3 on the following Wednesday.

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<sup>10</sup> Simon's transcript of the lectures fills the second part of the manuscript; the first part contains his transcript of the exercises (nr. 6 in our list). Between these parts appear, in Simon's hand, the titles of the questions (*Secuntur tytuli questionum super libris Ethicorum*, ff. 303<sup>r</sup>–305<sup>r</sup>), followed by eleven blank pages (ff. 305<sup>v</sup>–310<sup>v</sup>), and *autoritates* of the ten books of the *Ethics* (ff. 311<sup>r</sup>–315<sup>v</sup>).

<sup>11</sup> On Augustine of Weilheim, see Flüeler, “Ethica in Wien”, 118 n. 79. The colophons are transcribed *ibid.*, 124–125 (annotated on pp. 118–119).

He finished the last question on Wednesday 29 July, two weeks after the *ordinarium*, the official end of the academic year. The second original notebook is from the bachelor called Simon. He finished his transcript on the same day as Augustine, as he writes at the end of his notes.<sup>12</sup> The third manuscript, independent of the others, contains a possibly second-hand transcript by an unknown bachelor who also attended Wölfel's exercises.<sup>13</sup> The fact that the first two manuscripts are original notebooks is proved, first, by the colophons at the end of each book and of several individual questions, and which are certainly autographs; second, by the handwriting itself, which is hasty, cursory, and become more stretched near the end of each lecture—a sign that the writer became tired towards the end of class. At the beginning of a question (that is, at the start of a new class), the bachelors often changed their ink, and their handwriting is more tidy.

The collection of manuscripts on Wölfel's course on the *Ethics* is particularly interesting for four reasons. First, the original notebooks contain the notes of students who actually attended the lectures or exercises in Wölfel's classroom, not second-hand copies of such notes. It is worth observing that commentaries on Aristotle's works from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries usually only survive in manuscripts written after the author's death. The manuscripts containing Buridan's works, for example, are numerous,<sup>14</sup> but only six of the over 300 extant copies were written during Buridan's lifetime. Only two of these are believed to have been written directly by students in the classroom.<sup>15</sup> We surmise that all of Buridan's commentaries are somehow connected with his teaching, but virtually all of the extant manuscripts were produced years afterward on the basis of revised notes, not records students made at the time. Hence, there is a huge gap in our knowledge of

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<sup>12</sup> MS St. Florian, Stiftbibliothek XI.636, f. 302<sup>v</sup>: “Expliciunt disputata Ethicorum reverendi magistri Thome de Wulderstorff anno domini millesimoquadringentesimotercesimonono feria quarta post festum sancti Jacobi hora tertia Reportata per me Symonem in studio Wiennensi generali” (Wednesday 29 July 1439).

<sup>13</sup> The transcript can be attributed to Wölfel on the basis of the transcriptions below, pp. 000–000. The date given in Flüeler, “Ethica in Wien”, 123 (early fifteenth century) has to be corrected according to Müller, “Wiener Ethikkommentare”, 000: the watermarks hint to 1450 at the earliest. If the manuscript was written after 1450, it contains a copy of an earlier notebook.

<sup>14</sup> See Bernd Michael, “Johannes Buridan: Studien zu seinem Leben, seinen Werken und zur Rezeption seiner Theorien im Europa des späten Mittelalters” (Ph.D. diss. Freie Universität Berlin, 1985).

<sup>15</sup> See Flüeler, “From Oral Lecture to Written Commentaries”.

how the original teaching was transformed to the texts surviving in the manuscripts. Collections of original notes help us to understand how Aristotle's work was actually taught and to assess the value of extant manuscripts as sources for such teaching. Moreover, knowledge of the steps by which the commentaries came into existence helps us to interpret their contents.

Second, our collection contains records of both the lectures and the exercises. The great majority of manuscripts containing commentaries on the *Ethics* from the University of Vienna relate to exercises alone; notes on the lectures appear to be very rare. In my previous article, I was not able to determine with certainty what the subject of the lectures was, how they were structured, and how the exercises were linked to them.<sup>16</sup> All this can now be demonstrated on the basis of transcripts of the lectures.

Third, the lectures and the exercises taught by Wölfel are both recorded in two original, independent student notebooks. Such numbers of original notebooks written during the same course are, as far as I know, unique, and offer exceptional possibilities for gaining insight into the making of a commentary. By comparing several original transcripts we will be able to tell, to a certain extent, how faithfully the bachelors took notes, and even how well they understood the spoken word. Such a comparison is not possible on the basis of later copies and revised notes, because they may include material not discussed in class.

Fourth, our collection is only part of the rich manuscript material recording courses on the *Ethics* at the University of Vienna in the fifteenth century, so that Wölfel's teaching can be compared with the teaching of other Viennese masters. We know that commentaries on Aristotle's works were highly dependent on each other. Siger of Brabant, John of Jandun, and Radulphus Brito were certainly brilliant masters, but would we really consider them as original thinkers if we knew more about their sources and the earlier commentaries upon which they relied? In the case of fifteenth-century Viennese commentaries on the *Ethics*, we are able to assess to what extent the commentators were relying on earlier sources, especially on other lectures and exercises held in their own faculty.

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<sup>16</sup> Id., "Ethica in Wien", 122.

3. *Teaching magnanimity in the first half  
of the fifteenth century at the University of Vienna*

For my case study, I will focus on the interpretation of a passage in the fourth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* where Aristotle describes the virtue of magnanimity. As René-Antoine Gauthier has shown in his still valuable book,<sup>17</sup> the Aristotelian concept of magnanimity was in competition with other philosophical concepts current at the time, especially the Christian virtue of humility.

Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln and translator of the *Ethics*, went to some lengths to suggest that Aristotle's text had nothing to say about the Christian virtue of humility. The term *humilitas* is never used in his translation. Even the term *praôtes*, translated in the *Ethica vetus* as *humilitas*, is translated by Grosseteste as *mansuetudo*, apparently to ward off possible confusion with humility.<sup>18</sup> Although we find twice in chapter 4.8 the word *tapeinós* translated as *humilis*, the term does not denote a moral virtue. It refers to the social status of flatterers, a lower class people who are lacking in self-respect.<sup>19</sup>

In the Latin commentaries from the mid-thirteenth century onwards, chapters 4.7–8 of the *Nicomachean Ethics* were discussed in a range of questions (*quaestiones*). The earliest commentaries already discuss the question of whether magnanimity is a virtue. Buridan dedicated two questions of the fourth book to magnanimity: the tenth (*utrum secundum magnanimitatem honores sunt magis appetendi an contemndi, siue uel magnanimus magis appetat honores quam contemnat*), and the eleventh (*utrum magnanimitas sit virtus*).<sup>20</sup> Every Viennese master who lectured on Aristotle's *Ethics* was required to treat these questions. In the private exercises one session was regularly dedicated to the eleventh question, viz., the 82nd session

<sup>17</sup> René-Antoine Gauthier, *Magnanimité: L'idéal de la grandeur dans la philosophie païenne et dans la théologie chrétienne* (Paris, 1951; repr. 2005).

<sup>18</sup> Aristotle, *Ethica nicomachea* 2.7 (1108a6), ed. René-Antoine Gauthier (Leiden-Brussels, 1972–1974), 17 (*Ethica vetus*), 174 (*recensio pura*).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. 4.8, p. 215 (*recensio pura*).

<sup>20</sup> The commentaries on the *Ethics* from the second half of the thirteenth century usually dispute a larger set of questions. See, e.g., Giles of Orléans, *Questiones in Ethicam*, MS Paris, BnF lat. 16089, ff. 210<sup>va</sup>–211<sup>va</sup>, discussing five questions: *Consequenter queritur circa virtutem magnanimitatis, utrum magnanimitas sit virtus? Consequenter queritur, utrum magnanimitas sit virtus specialis? Consequenter queritur, utrum magnanimitas existat circa honores? Consequenter queritur, utrum bona fortune conferant ad magnanimitatem? Consequenter queritur de vitiis oppositis magnanimitati et primo de vitio in superhabundantia, quod dicitur presumptio uel caumotes et queritur, utrum presumptio sit vitium?*

of the academic year. I have chosen to focus on this question not only as homage to Gauthier, but also because we may expect a variety of answers to it in the commentaries. Magnanimity seems, at least at first blush, to recommend acting in a way contrary to the Christian virtue of humility. Several authors therefore used question 4.11 as a platform to compare the Aristotelian concept of magnanimity with the Christian concept of humility. My primary purpose is not, however, to offer a doctrinal analysis. I use the question on magnanimity mainly in order to reconstruct in as much detail as possible what happened during a single meeting in the classroom. I will first discuss the lecture on magnanimity and then the corresponding exercise.

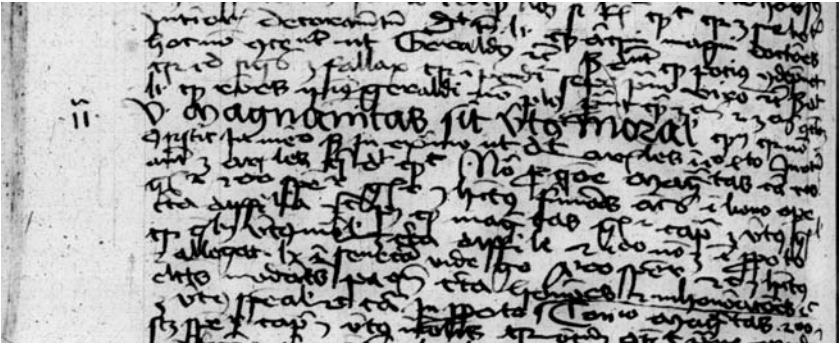
### 3a. *The lecture of Thomas Wölfel of Wuldersdorf*

The Statutes tell us very little about the lectures, specifying only the textbooks and the fees due to the lecturers. Masters have to lecture on the first six books of the *Ethics* (tit. XIV) and each bachelor has to pay 12 *grossi* (tit. XXIV). If the master wishes to read a book (singular) of the *Ethics* on a holiday, he should do this for free (tit. XXIII).<sup>21</sup> The Statutes do not tell us, however, *how* masters should read the *Ethics*. In fact, I am able to verify that the masters of the Faculty of Arts in Vienna did not read Aristotle at all! Aristotle was not the subject of the lectures; instead, the masters read Buridan's questions on the Aristotelian *Ethics*, as they did in the exercises, albeit in a different way. As we shall see, the lectures consisted of paraphrased presentations of Buridan's questions rather than literal commentaries (*expositiones*).

The scribe of the first manuscript on my list is the bachelor Wolfgang Kidrer (Chydrer) of Salzburg. He studied at the University of Vienna from 1437, was a bachelor from 1439 on, and received on 1 September 1441 permission to lecture on the first book of Euclid. Wolfgang of Salzburg started his transcript of Wölfel's lectures with the twelfth question of the second book, in the first week of February 1439, probably just after his graduation. He dated the last question of the fifth book on Tuesday 21 July 1439, eight days before the corresponding question was treated in the exercises.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> See Lhotsky, *Die Wiener Artistenfakultät*, 251–253.

<sup>22</sup> Thomas Wölfel, *Reportata brevia*, f. 103: "Et sic est finis huius quinti, anno etc. 39mo in profesto sancte Marie Magdalene reportata sunt hec brevia in leccione per me Wolfgangum de Salczburga".



Thomas Wölfel of Wuldersdorf, *Reportata brevia super II.12-VI libros Ethicorum Aristotelis* (reportatio Wolfgangi), MS Munich, BSB clm 19668, ff. 89<sup>v</sup>-90<sup>r</sup>

11<sup>a</sup> VTRUM MAGNANIMITAS SIT VIRTUS MORALIS?

Quod non, quia non consistit in medio, sed in extremo, ut dicit Aristoteles in illo quarto.

In oppositum autem est Aristoteles, qui dicit quod sic.

Nota pro questione: Magnanimitas capitur primo modo generaliter, secundo 5 modo specialiter. Generaliter est habitus firmans animum in bono opere circa difficilia. Et sic patet quod magnanimitas generaliter capta est virtus generalis, quia quelibet virtus moralis est circa difficile. Et primo modo non est in proposito. Et allegat hec, in Senecam vide, ergo (etc.) Alio modo specialiter. Et hoc 10 est habitus electius moderatius passionum circa honores et inhonorationes. Et sic est virtus specialis. Et sic capitur in proposito.

Conclusio. Magnanimitas secundo modo, scilicet specialiter capta, est virtus moralis, quia utrumque contingit prae excedere et deficere, et ubi medium est laudabile, contingit dare virtutem que inclinatur ad illud medium et non erit aliud nisi magnanimitas. Ergo etc. Sed quod circa honores contingit excedere, 15 patet, quia sunt appetendi et est dictamen recte rationis, et quandoque non obsunt, sed prosunt ipsis, ut si quis est satis dispositus ad unum statum et refutaret eundem, prae ageret, quia refutaret honores sibi debitos et multa bona opera, que posset properari (?) in tali statu. Et sic homo se ipso non debet se ingerere talibus honoribus, sed debet exspectare vocationem (?), cuius 20 oppositum tamen (?) communiter fit. Item nullus debet plus appetere honores quam opera virtutum, alias sepe fieri ypocrites, nam ad nichil boni facientes fingunt se bene agere, et cupiunt sibi signa reuerentiae exhiberi, et cupiunt se esse dignos, quibus non sunt digni, sed sunt pravi et superbi.

20 honoribus *in marg.*

Et sic ad questionem quod magnanimitas est virtus specialis, quia habet specialem obiectum, quia est circa honores. Sed primo modo capiendo nichil ad propositum.

Et ad Aristotelem dicentem quod consistit in extremo. Ideo dicit quantum ad  
5 quantitatem consistit in extremo, tamen adhuc quo ad rationem consistit in medio. Magnanimus est magnitudine quidem extremus, hec Aristoteles.

Item Aristoteles dicit, magnanimi videbitur per quod in unaquacumque  
presupponit (?). Et sic magnanimus in qualibet virtute operatur magna, scilicet  
humilitate, fortitudine etc. Et sic presupponit quamlibet aliam virtutem, ex quo  
10 perfecte virtuosus presupponit, tamen addit bene est virtus specialis.

Sed non est dispositio uel virtus corporalis. Ad probationem, quia sunt  
motus lentus, motus grauis, vox grauis, quia loquitur cum magna deliberatione  
et est locutio stabilis. Et sic Aristoteles ponit quantum (?) circa aliquas proprietates  
corporales, quia virtus moralis etiam habet regulare aliquas proprietates  
15 inferiores. Non tamen ille proprietates sunt magnanimitas, scilicet motus lentus,  
etc. Sed bene habet illum motum lentum regulare, etc.

Item. Magnanimus non habet condiciones oppositas felici. Ad probationem  
Aristoteles dicit, magnanimus neque gaudiosus neque tristis etc. Responditur  
quod etiam letatur et gaudium habet magnanimus, sed tamen plus gaudet  
20 quam tristatur.

Item magnanimitas non habet prauas condiciones et aliis virtutibus oppositas.

Et magnanimi sunt despectores nisi bonorum exteriorum in quantum sunt  
opposita virtutum, sed non simpliciter despiciunt eos. Et contempnunt alios,  
25 sed non quoscumque, sed adulatorum et vitiosorum. Et sic non sequitur quod  
magnanimus sit superbus, ymo est vere humilis. Ymo idem habitus est magnanimitas  
et humilitas, et licet sit opinio etiam opposita.

Et magnanimus non verecundatur, sed habet quandam similitudinem cum  
verecundia, quia per magnanimitatem retrahitur a minori bono, sicut iuuenis  
30 verecundus per verecundiam retrahitur a turpibus etc., et sic non verecundatur.  
Quod aliter (?), si bene fecit, sed vult retribuere sibi et habet bene in  
memoria eos, a quibus est bene passus, et non est ingratus et non habet eos in  
memoria eos ad bene pati, sed ut retribuatur eis. f. 90<sup>r</sup>

Item. Magnanimus non est piger, nec ociosus, etc. Sed dicitur piger simi-  
35 litudine, quia est multum intentus ad maiores et meliores operationes, et sic  
modicum curat minores operationes, et sic habet similitudinem cum tarditate,  
et sic videtur quodammodo obliuisci minores, que sepius sibi occurrunt.

Item. Magnanimus non est superbus et potest valde bene conuiuere cum  
aliis, sed non quibuscumque, quia cum adulatoribus et vitiosis non potest in  
40 pace (?) conuiuere, sed bene cum amicis suis et virtuosis.

Item. Magnanimus etiam est memor mali, non tamen quo ad vindictam,  
sed ut istud non operetur et (...) ad minorari bonum.

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5 extremo] quia est circa mores atque honores, vnde dicit sic *add. in marg.*



Item. Magnanimus non habet malas conditiones et aliquid dicitur perfructuosum, a quo quis potest habere magnam pecuniam sine labore, et vulgus vocat illud infructuosus, ubi quis potest habere minus cum magnis laboribus, et sic est modum dicendi vulgi. Magnanimus possidet infructuosa, scilicet virtutes, que acquiruntur cum maximis laboribus, et non habet de illo magnam pecuniam, sed tamen in rei veritate possidet vere fructuosa, quia iste virtutes maxime fructuose sunt. 5

Item. Magnanimus non est humaniloquus secundum habundantiam, quia non loquitur multum, sed solum secundum dicta est recte rationis, quia in multiloquio non deerit peccatum. 10

Item. Magnanimus etiam est laudatius, sed tamen non ita sicut adulatores, sed parce, iuxta consilium Senecae: parce lauda, parce vituperata. Etiam ipse curat, ut parce laudetur, sed tamen non principaliter, sed minus principaliter et principaliter intendit ad honores.

Item magnanimus est oditor malorum, sed non virtuosorum. 15

Et yronia quandoque fit, quando datur oppositum istis per aliquam orationem et non est vitium oppositum veritati, capiendo pro reprehensione, et sic magnanimus etiam utitur yronia, que non tamen est opposita veritati. Ergo adhuc est virtuosus.

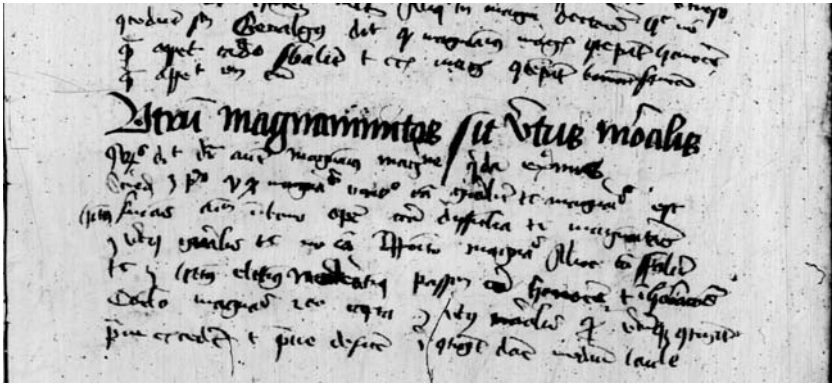
Illas decem rationes adducit Buridanus sub aliis viis. Vide si placet. 20

Wolfgang took his notes during the lectures (*reportata sunt hec brevia in lectione*). The term *brevia* indicates that not every word of the master was jotted down. Wolfgang's *brevia* on the question of whether magnanimity is a virtue contain a short presentation of Buridan's question, then focus on his conclusion (*corpus articuli*) and especially on his replies to the introductory arguments (*ad rationes*). They do not treat those arguments in detail. The conclusion of the question is, in Wolfgang's view, that magnanimity is a specific, not a general virtue: *Magnanimitas secundo modo, scilicet specialiter capta, est virtus moralis* (p. 286, ll. 12–13). Wolfgang does not articulate the arguments in the form of syllogisms.

It is difficult to tell on the basis of Wolfgang's *brevia* how exactly the master proceeded and how he structured his lecture, since the *brevia* are not a verbatim transcript of Wölfel's teaching. It is therefore necessary to turn to the second transcript of the lectures, recorded by the bachelor Simon:

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16 yronia] sed eyronia est virtus opposita veritate *add. in marg.*



Thomas Wölfel of Wuldersdorf, *Lectura librorum Ethicorum* (reportatio Simonis), MS St. Florian, Stiftsbibliothek XI.636, ff. 369<sup>r</sup>–370<sup>r</sup>

### VTRUM MAGNANIMITAS SIT VIRTUS MORALIS?

Aristoteles dicit, dicitur autem magnanimus magnitudine quidam extremus.

Sciendum est primo quod magnanimitas uno modo capitur generaliter, et sic magnanimitas est habitus firmans animum in bono opere circa difficultia. Et sic magnanimitas est virtus generalis, et sic non capitur in proposito. Magnanimitas aliter capitur specialiter et sic est habitus electius moderatius passionum circa honores et inhonorationes.

Conclusio. Magnanimitas secundo modo capta est virtus moralis, quod (ubi) utrumque contingit prave excedere et prave deficere, ibi contingit dare medium laudabile | quod indiget virtute. Sed circa honores contingit excedere et deficere vituperabiliter, ita circa eos dabile est medium laudabile, quod indiget virtute, que virtus erit magnanimitas. f. 369<sup>v</sup>

Quoniam pro illa parte quod plus appetens uel minus appetens honores quam oportet, sunt vitiosi et sic magnanimitas consistit in medio rationis, licet consistat in extremo quod ad rem uel (...), ut dicit Aristoteles. Dicitur autem magnanimus magnitudine quidem est extremus quantum (ad) quantitatem, tamen ratione tenet medium.

Et magnanimitas non est virtus nec dispositio corporalis, sed bene est circa aliquas proprietates corporales, scilicet vocem ut fiat grauis, motum ut fiat lentus et maturus, et sermones ut fiat moralis et maturi et stabiles et deliberati.

Et magnanimus non habet conditiones oppositas felici, et quando Aristoteles dicit quod magnanimus non gaudet de fortunis et non est gaudiosus, nec

3 quod] iter. 14 sunt] defectuosi add. sed del. 20 et<sup>3</sup>] morale add. sed del. 22 non<sup>2</sup>] delci (?) add. sed del.

tristatur de infortunis, et sic dicit primo huius, quod infortunia tribulant et conturbant beatum. Ibi dico quod non est ⟨...⟩ gaudens uel ⟨...⟩

Et magnanimus est despector bonorum exteriorum, non simpliciter, sed in quantum repugnant virtutibus et eius operationibus et ergo sunt contemptiui adulatorum et generaliter omnium malorum et sic de virtute trahentium sunt despectiui. 5

Item magnanimus non verecundatur, sed habet quandam similitudinem cum verecundo, quia sicut iuuenis per verecundiam retrahitur a malis, sic etiam magnanimus per magnanimitatem retrahitur a minoribus honestis ad maiorem honestam. Et etiam magnanimus bene habet in memoria, a quibus bene passus est in quantum fecerunt sibi, sed non habet eos in memoria ad bene pati ab eis, sed habet eos in memoria, ut retribuatur eis. 10

Et etiam magnanimus non est piger, nec ociosus, nec tardus. Sed dicitur piger, tardus et ociosus similitudine, quia modicum est intentus ad parua bona opera, sed solum curat magna et excellentie bona opera. 15

Item magnanimus potest valde bene conuiuere ad seipsum et etiam cum aliis, sed non potest bene conuiuere cum quibuscumque, scilicet cum adulatoribus et vitiosis.

Item magnanimus est memor mali, sed non est memor mali preteriti quo ad vindictam, et hoc vult Aristoteles, sed bene memorat mali preteriti. 20

f. 370<sup>r</sup> Item aliquid dicitur fructuosum a quo quis potest habere magnam pecuniam sine magno et multo labore, sed illud dicitur infructuosum |, ubi quis habet paucas pecunias cum multo ⟨...⟩ labore, et hoc secundum vulgum. Et sic tunc magnanimus iuxta modo loquendi volgi possidet infructuosa, sed tamen ipse in rei veritate possidet maxime fructuosa, scilicet virtutes. 25

Item magnanimus non est humanoquus superhabundanter, quia pauca loquitur, sed tamen est humanoquus ⟨secundum quod oportet⟩ (?).

Item magnanimus etiam laudat alios, sed tamen parce laudet alios, et hoc non sicut adultores, et etiam curat laudari, sed tamen principaliter non curat multum laudari. 30

Item magnanimus dicitur etiam oditor, non omnium, sed solum malorum.

Item yronia est, si aliquando fit, quando per orationem aliquid datur oppositum intelligi, et talis yronia non est vitium oppositum veritati, et aliquis licite potest quandoque uti yronia.

Simon's notes, like Wolfgang's, were written in the classroom. The fact that several passages are nearly identical in both transcripts and display a similar structure indicates that both men's notes are reports of the same lecture. Simon's notes (564 words) are briefer, even though only Wolfgang called his notes *brevia* (872 words). A comparison of the two transcripts confirms that Simon's notes are *brevia* as well, since his transcript lacks passages that appear in Wolfgang's *brevia* and vice versa.

18 vitiosis] non *add.* 21 fructuosum] a quibus *add.*

Yet the wording differs even in the passages that both transcripts have in common:

*Reportata brevia* (reportatio Wolfgangi)  
(see above, p. 286, ll. 5–11)

Nota pro questione:  
Magnanimitas capitur primo modo generaliter, secundo modo specialiter. Generaliter est habitus firmans animum in bono opere circa difficilia. Et sic patet, quod magnanimitas generaliter capta est virtus generalis, quia quilibet virtus moralis est circa difficile. Et primo modo non est in proposito. Et allegat hec, in Senecam vide, ergo (etc.) Alio modo specialiter. Et sic est habitus electius moderatius passionum circa honores et inhonorationes. Et sic est virtus specialis. Et sic capitur in proposito.

(see above, p. 287, ll. 34–37)  
Item. Magnanimus non est piger, nec ociosus, etc. Sed dicitur piger similitudine, quia est multum intentus ad maiores et meliores operationes, et sic modicum curat minores operationes, et sic habet similitudinem cum tarditate, et sic videtur quodammodo obliuisci minores, que sepius sibi occurrunt.

*Lectura librorum Ethicorum* (reportatio Simonis) (see above, p. 289, ll. 3–7)

Sciendum est primo quod [quod] magnanimitas unomodo capitur generaliter, et sic magnanimitas est habitus firmans animum in bono opere circa difficilia. Et sic magnanimitas est virtus generalis, et sic non capitur in proposito.

Magnanimitas aliter capitur specialiter. Et sic est habitus electius moderatius passionum circa honores et inhonorationes.

(see above, p. 290, ll. 13–15)

Et etiam magnanimus non est piger, nec ociosus, nec tardus. Sed dicitur piger, tardus et ociosus similitudine, quia modicum est intentus ad parua bona opera, sed solum curat magna et excellentiores bona opera.

Where one bachelor writes *nota pro questione*, the other has *sciendum est quod*; where one has *capitur primo modo*, the other has *unomodo capitur*, and so forth. What can explain these differences? Both transcripts have their common source in the spoken word. The lecture was obviously not a dictation. The divergences between the two transcripts suggest that Wölfel spoke freely, slowly, but fluently, so that it was difficult to take notes. Part of the terms that differ are set phrases (used, for instance, for introducing an argument), which were more or less interchangeable and for which different abbreviations existed. Also, it is possible that Wölfel after finishing an explanation made the effort to resume it in other words, and that each bachelor recorded a different version of the argument.

The structure of the question as it appears in the two transcripts is the same. Wölfel apparently did not read Buridan's text, but summarized it in a free presentation. The few, short quotations in the tran-

scripts were all drawn from Buridan. Even all quotations attributed to Aristotle were actually taken from Buridan, never directly from Aristotle himself. Indeed, there is only one passage where the master goes beyond Buridan and makes a contribution of his own by claiming that magnanimity and humility are the same *habitus*; Wölfel hastens to add that this opinion is not shared by everyone (*reportatio Wolfgangi*, above, p. 287, ll. 26–27). This claim does not form a prominent part of the lecture, however; it appears as an almost casual remark on Buridan’s reply to the fifth argument. The bachelor Simon did not even consider it worth recording.

The *concepta* related to Wölfel’s lecture are extant in two other manuscripts. The compiler, Ulrich Greymolt of Weilheim, was a student in Vienna from 1435. Like Wolfgang of Salzburg, he became a bachelor in January 1439 and started attending Wölfel’s lectures immediately after obtaining his degree, even though the course had started some months earlier, in October 1438. Hence Ulrich, like Wolfgang, missed the lectures on books 1 q. 1 to 2 q. 11. Nevertheless, Ulrich composed *concepta* of all of Wölfel’s lectures with the aid of other bachelors’ notes and a manuscript of Buridan’s questions.

The *concepta* were not actually written during the lectures themselves, at least as far as the questions of books 1 to 4 are concerned. Ulrich must have taken notes during the lectures which he later reworked into their present form. Evidence for this fact are the dates appearing at the end of books 1, 2, 5, and 6, stretching from Saturday 18 July (at the end of book 1, f. 36<sup>r</sup>) to Thursday 27 August 1439 (at the end of book 6, f. 183<sup>v</sup>). In this period Wölfel was lecturing on the fifth and sixth books.<sup>23</sup> Ulrich wrote his summary of the question on magnanimity at the end of July, partially on the basis of notes taken in the classroom in May, when the lecture was given.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> For transcriptions of the colophons see Flüeler, “Ethica in Wien”, 126.

<sup>24</sup> See Thomas Wölfel, *Concepta* 5 q. 29 (*Utrum iniustum facere sit peius quam iniustum pati*), f. 153<sup>v</sup> (at the end of the fifth book): “Et tantum de questionibus huius quinti Ethicorum oportet sufficere pro nunc. Feria quinta post festum sancte Magdalene in lectione reportata magistri Thome de Buldersdorf pro parte”. The last question on book 5 was therefore written on Thursday 23 July 1439, two days after the lecture was held by Wölfel (see above, n. 22). Difficult to interpret is the meaning of *pro parte*. Does this refer to *Thome de Buldersdorf* or to *in lectione reportata*?

Thomas Wölfel of Wuldersdorf, *Concepta sex librorum Ethicorum reportata in lectione pro parte* (versio Udalrici de Weilheim), MS Munich, BSB clm 19848, ff. 114<sup>r</sup>–115<sup>v</sup>

## VTRUM MAGNANIMITAS SIT VIRTUS MORALIS?

11<sup>a</sup> 4<sup>i</sup>

Notandum quod Seneca in suo libello de 4 virtutibus cardinalibus non ponit magnanimitatem aliam virtutem a fortitudine, unde ipse non distinxit virtutes per distinctiones obiectorum, sed per diuersas proprietates, quas omnis virtus circa suum obiectum conspicit.

Seneca

5 Vnde Seneca omnem virtutem firmantem animum in opere suo bono circa difficilia vocat magnanimitatem seu fortitudinem. Et sic magnanimitas non est accipienda in proposito. Aliter igitur Aristotelis quarto huius capit magnanimitatem pro virtute specificè distincta a fortitudine et alias virtutes.

Et magnanimitas stricte sumpta est habitus | moderans passiones appetitus circa  
10 honores et inhonorationes.

f. 114<sup>v</sup>  
stricte et  
specialiter

Tunc respondetur ad questionem quod magnanimitas secundo modo est virtus moralis.

conclusio  
responsalis

15 Probatur, quia circa quecunque bona humana uel mala contingit nos male habere excedendo uel deficiendo et bene tenendo medium. Tunc indigemus virtute determinante nos ad medium tale. Sed circa honores et inhonorationes contingit praue excedere et deficere praue et secundum medium bene se habere. Igitur indigemus virtute determinante nos ad tale medium seruandum. Talem autem virtutem vocamus magnanimitatem. Minor probatur, quia appetens honores plus quam virtutes ille peruertit ordinem rerum, eo quod non sint appetendi honores, nisi propter virtutes et opera earum; alias  
20 enim unus fieret ypocrita et superbus. Quorum etiam contingat deficere, patet, quia utique vitiosum, si quis habens magnam scientiam, sufficientes diuitias et amicos ad aliquid officium honorabile occupandum, in quo posset multas exercere virtuosas operationes et multum prodesse populo. Sic se reputet indignum, ut se priuans honore tali, priuet se etiam multis bonis operibus. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 corp. art.; passages  
25 quoted verbatim are italicized]

Ulterius notandum quod Aristotelis quarto huius aliquas ponit magnanimi conditiones.

Prima est quod ipse est despector et contemptiuus, scilicet bonorum exteriorum, non simpliciter, sed ubi eorum adquisitio aut affectus repugnaret operibus virtutum.

30 Secunda conditio quod magnanimus beneficiatus verecundatur, non verecundatur benefaciens, id est tardus et ad operationes minorum honestatum, sed pronior ad operandum excellentes. Beneficiare autem melius est et excellentius quam beneficiari. Igitur.

35 Tertia condicio quod non habet bene in memoria eos, a quibus | bene passus est, id est non habet tales in memoria in quantum beneficiatus est, principaliter saltem, sed principaliter, ut retribuatur eis.

f. 115<sup>r</sup>

Quarta quod est *ociosus et piger*, scilicet ad minores operationes, ut inde maiores operetur.

Quinta est, quia *non potest ad alium vivere*, id est non potest bene vivere cum adulatoribus et *multos iocos et solacia sensualia affectantibus*, quia *tardus est in verbis iocosis*, sed *maturus* in seriosis, *bene* tamen *viuit* ad amicos virtuosos. 5

Sexta conditio quod *non est memor mali*, scilicet *quo ad vindictam capiendam*. Bene *tamen est memor ipsorum*, *prout memoria ipsorum valet ad melius operandum*.

Septima, quia *magis* possidet *infructuosa quam fructuosa*, ut propositis duobus beneficiis, uno cum paruis rebus utilibus, sed cum magnis laboribus et operationibus virtuosis annexis, altero autem per oppositam. Tunc ipse dimittet 10 secundum et reciperet primum. Et primum dicitur infructuosius secundum vulgus, licet in rei veritate sit fructuosius; et Aristoteles locutus est vulgariter.

Octaua conditio quod *non est humaniloquus*, scilicet *in superhabentiam verborum*, *sed secundum quod oportet et secundum quod decet statum suum*. 15

Nona quod *non est laudatiuus* neque curat quod laudetur, scilicet adulatorie aut *excessiue*.

Decima, quia non est manifestus oditor, scilicet reproborum.

Undecima, quia *utilitur yronia*, id est derisione, scilicet *reprehendendo bona intentione malos sub verbis contrarium significantibus per modum indignationis habite de* 20  
f. 115<sup>v</sup> *malitia ipsorum*, ut dicendo *vide* |, *quomodo bene agis*, id est male agis, et secundum alios hoc dicitur *tyrania*. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5]

nota Vltimo notandum quod idem habitus est magnanimitas et humilitas, sed diuersis rationibus sic nominantur. Dicitur enim magnanimitas inquantum inclinatur ad dignificandum se honoribus quibus dignus est. Sed dicitur humilitas in 25 quantum inclinatur ad non dignificandum se honoribus quibus non dignus est. Alii dicunt quod sint diuersi habitus. [cf. Thomas Ebendorfer, below, p. 326, ll. 34–42]

Ulrich's question on magnanimity consists of a rather close paraphrase of a part of Buridan's solution (*corpus articuli*) and the replies to the long fifth argument as they appear in the notes of Wolfgang and Simon. The reply begins exactly as it does in Simon's notes: *magnanimitas secundo modo est virtus moralis*. Like the transcripts, Ulrich's *concepta* show that Wölfel followed Buridan closely, arguing that magnanimity is not a general virtue according to Aristotle, but a special virtue distinct from fortitude. Like Wolfgang, Ulrich made mention of Wölfel's sole deviation from Buridan, including it in his final observation (*Vltimo notandum*) where Wölfel compares magnanimity and humility in much the same terms

3 quia] ut *sed corr. supra lin. manu scribae* 11 infructuosius] secundo *add.* 23 Vltimo] Item nota idem in re est magnanimitas et humilitas *in marg. sup.* 24–25 inclinatur] quem *add.*

as Thomas Ebendorfer in his commentary on the *Ethics* written in 1424 (see Appendix).

The fourth manuscript relating to Wölfel's lectures is a direct copy of books 1 to 5 q. 23 of Ulrich's *concepta* by an anonymous scribe.<sup>25</sup> It once belonged to Wolfgang Kidrer of Salzburg, who donated it to the abbey library of Tegernsee. Being a copy, the manuscript does not offer us an independent view of Wölfel's lectures, but its existence nevertheless reveals something about university teaching at Vienna. It shows conclusively that a manuscript on books 1 to 5 of the *Ethics* is not necessarily a report of the exercises,<sup>26</sup> even though the Statutes require that exercises be held on exactly those books. Both classes—lectures and exercises—centred around Buridan's questions; the question form is hence not a differentiator and a scribe could well omit the sixth book, as happened in this case.

### 3b. *The exercises of Thomas Wölfel of Wuldersdorf*

Thomas Wölfel held disputations on the question of whether magnanimity is a virtue between Wednesday 20 and Saturday 23 May 1439.<sup>27</sup> The corresponding lecture was probably held several days earlier, around 15 May.<sup>28</sup>

Both original notebooks of the exercises contain notes on the session on magnanimity. The title of the relevant question was written by both bachelors in an easily legible gothic bookhand in big letters: *utrum magnanimitas sit virtus moralis?* The fact that the title of the question was so clearly written, combined with the fact that the text of the question was written in a difficult, cramped script, suggests that the bachelors wrote the title of the question in their copybooks before the session started, perhaps at the end of the previous session, when the

<sup>25</sup> The manuscript breaks off at f. 101<sup>r</sup> with the title of q. 24.

<sup>26</sup> As presumed in Flüeler, "Ethica in Wien", p. 117.

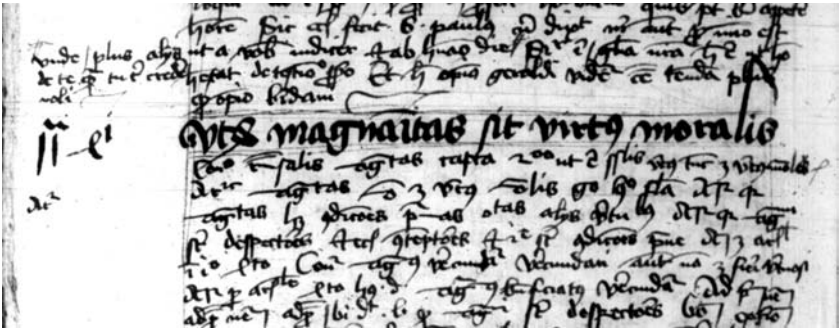
<sup>27</sup> According to the notes of Augustine of Weilheim, the exercises on the fourth book began on Tuesday 5 May 1439 and finished on Saturday 6 June 1439. Every week had four sessions; the first session of the week of 3 to 10 May (Monday 4 May) was devoted to the last question of book 3. The eleventh question of book 4 was therefore disputed during the fourth session in the week of 17 to 23 May. The exact day cannot be determined because the exercises were held on all days, including Sunday. The question can thus have been disputed anytime between the fourth day of the week (Wednesday) and the latest (Saturday).

<sup>28</sup> We can infer this from the fact that he lectured on the last question of the fifth book six days before the corresponding exercise. See above, n. 000.



master, following the Statutes of the Faculty, announced the question for the next meeting of the class (the Statutes refer to *questiones consuetae et precognitae*).

The structure of the transcripts in the notebooks gives us some sense of what happened in a disputation. The structure is especially clear from the transcript of Augustine of Weilheim, who marked the different elements of the question with marginal signs. Both transcripts begin with the *conclusio responsalis*, that is, the conclusion drawn by Wölfel in the corresponding lecture. The aim of the private exercises was to test these conclusions by confronting them with a number of counter-arguments.



Thomas Wölfel de Wuldersdorf, *Exercitia librorum Ethicorum* (reportatio Augustini), MS Munich, BSB clm 19673, f. 188<sup>v</sup>–190<sup>r</sup>

II<sup>a</sup> 4<sup>i</sup> VTRUM MAGNANIMITAS SIT VIRTUS MORALIS?

Conclusio responsalis. Magnanimitas capta secundo modo, ut est specialis virtus; tunc est virtus moralis.

ar<sup>r</sup> Arguitur sic. Magnanimitas non est virtus moralis. Ergo conclusio falsa. Argumentum probatur, quia magnanimitas *habet condiciones prauas oppositas aliis virtutibus*. Argumentum probatur, *quia magnanimi sunt despectores et eciam contemptores*, et ille sunt condiciones prauae. Argumentum est Aristotelis in illo quarto. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 arg. 5]

Confirmatur. *Magnanimus verecundatur*, verecundari autem non est *viri virtuosus*. Argumentum probatur per Aristotelem quarto huius dicens *magnanimus beneficiatus verecundatur*. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 arg. 5b]

Ad probationem negatur. Ad probationem negatur. Ad probationem ibi dicit .b., *quod magnanimi sunt despectores bonorum exteriorum, non simpliciter, sed*

9 *vir*] fieri

in quantum repugnant *operibus virtuosis*, id est in quantum hominem impediunt ab operibus virtuosis, et *sunt contemptores*, scilicet *adulationum, timorum et uniuersaliter omnium, que possent seducere a bonis. Sed ipsi non sunt contemptiui dei siue hominum, nisi malorum ratione suarum maliciarum.* [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5a]

Ad secundum negatur argumentum. Ad probationem pro Aristotele respondet .b. quod ipse *non* habet verecundiam, *sed dicitur verecundari* propter similitudinem, quia oportet ipsi verecundari, quia *reddit se tardiozem ad operationes minoris honestatis*, quia ipse intendit principaliter operationibus maximis virtuosis. Et etiam propter hoc, quia *beneficiare est melius beneficiari*, sed *magnanimus beneficiatus quasi inde verecundaretur quod in opere virtutis exceditur* ab alio et propter hoc, quia *statim retribuit*, sed tamen non verecundatur [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5b]

Arguitur ad idem: dispositio corporalis non est virtus moralis. *Sed magnanimitas* ar<sup>r</sup>  
15 est *dispositio corporalis*. Igitur etc. Argumentum probatur, quia *virtus moralis* est dispositio *mentis*. Sed dispositio corporalis est in corpore. Minor probatur, quia *magnanimitas habet proprietates et dispositiones corporales*. Igitur est dispositio corporalis. | Tenet consequentia, quia conditiones et proprietates corporales f. 189<sup>r</sup>  
20 pertinent ad dispositionem corporalem. Arguitur, quia *dicit Aristoteles* in isto quarto: Magnanimus—*motus lentus, vox grauis, locutio stabilis*. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 arg. 3 and Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 arg. 3]

Ad argumentum negatur minor. Ad probationem concedo quod habet tales proprietates, sed non est ille proprietates et negatur quod ergo non sit virtus moralis. Nam dicit .b. quod *potentie anime superiores, cum fuerint perfecte per virtutes* 25 *sibi debitas, habent regulare potentias inferiores*. Ergo *non est inconueniens virtuti attribuere proprietates et conditiones corporales, non tamen sicut elicitas, sed sicut regulatas ab illa virtute siue ab illa potentia virtus existit*. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 3]

Et tum notandum quod *velocitas motus prouenit ex eo, quod homo ad multa attendit,* no<sup>m</sup>  
30 *que explere festinant. Sed magnanimus intendit solum ad magna, que sunt pauca, que indigent etiam magna inquisitione et cogitatione, et ideo habet motum tardum. Similiter etiam acuitas vocis et velocitas precipue competit his, qui de quibuslibet intendere volunt, quod non pertinet ad magnanimum, qui non intromittit se, nisi de magnis. Et sicut predictae proprietates corporaliu[m] motuum conueniunt magnanimis secundum motum (!) affectionis eorum; ita etiam in istis magnanimis, qui sunt naturaliter dispositi ad modum magnanimorum, qui sunt naturaliter dispositi.* [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 ra. 3]

Arguitur ad idem. *Nulla virtus moralis opponitur alteri virtuti. Sed magnanimitas* ar<sup>r</sup>  
*opponitur alteri virtuti*. Igitur non est virtus moralis. Minor probatur, quia

9 operationibus] principaliter operibus *add.*, *corr. intra lin. ex operationibus iter.* | Et] *nova lin.* 11 alio] ... (?) verecundatur *add. sed del.* | quia] quia *add.*, *corr. intra lin. ex q...* stat... (?) 16 Sed] virtus *add. sed del.* 18 conditiones] *corr. supra lin. ex dispositiones* 28 homo] *intra lin.* | multa] *rescr. intra lin. pro m...* (?) 30 cogitatione] *vatigatione* 32 intromittit] *rescr. intra lin. pro o*

*opponitur humilitati*, et humilitas est virtus moralis. Argumentum probatur, quia *magnanimus reputat se magnis et maximis dignum*, humilis autem habet motum (!) contrarium. Minor probatur, quia humilis non reputat se dignum magnis seu maximis honoribus, quia homo est de conditione humilis. [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 arg. 4]

Confirmatur. *Magnanimus non habet in memoria eos, a quibus est bene passus, et per consequens est ingratus et vitiosus*. Argumentum probatur per Aristotelem in littera. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 arg. 5c]

Item. Ipse est *tardus, piger, ociosus*; igitur vitiosus. Argumentum probatur per Aristotelem. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 arg. 5d]

Ad probationem negatur. Ad probationem negatur. Ad probationem dico quod idem est humilis et magnanimus. Et ipse magnanimus reputat se esse dignum magnis honoribus secundum alia et alia iudicia. Et idem magnanimus inclinatur ad refutandum honores minores secundum alia et alia iudicia. Et sic est unus habitus ipsa magnanimitas et humilitas, licet secundum alios sint duo habitus. Et sic dico quod humilitas et magnanimitas non sunt contraria, quia sunt unus habitus. Sed tamen videntur *tendere ad contraria*, quia humilis inclinatur ad refutandum honores secundum dictamen recte rationis secundum aliqua iudicia, et secundum alia iudicia appetit honores secundum dictamen recte rationis.

Ad aliud negatur argumentum. Ad probationem pro Aristotele dico quod vult tamen quod magnanimus *non habet in memoria eos, a quibus bene passus est*, ut sic *bene patiatur*, sed *habet eos in memoria, ut eis retribuat et benefaciat*. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5c]

Ad aliud negatur quod sit ociosus, etc., sed ad illum sensum, quia habet *quandam similitudinem* cum ociositate et pigritia et tarditate. Nam ipse *intentus ad maiores operationes et quasi videtur obliuisci de minoribus operationibus, que sepius occurrunt*. Et sic dicitur esse *ociosus*. Consequenter dicitur esse *piger*, quia non decet magnum *operari magis ex impetu*, ideo *nichil operatur, | nisi mature et cum magna deliberatione et propter hoc videtur esse piger*. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5d].

ar<sup>r</sup> Arguitur ad idem. Humilitas non stat cum magnanimitate. Igitur dicta falsa. Argumentum probatur, quia *humilis non habet modum et motum leoninum in gestu, sed magnanimus habet modum leoninum in gestu*. Ergo etiam humilitas non stat cum magnanimitate. Tenet consequentia, quia habent conditiones contrarias, magnanimitas et humilitas; et conditiones contrarie non stant simul. Arguitur ut supra, quia supradicte conditiones non stant simul.

conf<sup>r</sup> Confirmatur. *Humilis vilescit sibi*. [Sed] *magnanimus autem non vilescit sibi*. Argumentum probatur, quia est una conditio humilitatis, quod humilis apareat sibi vilescere, alias esset vitiosus.

2 reputat] corr. in marg. ex dat 4 est] eo add sed del. 16 quod] iter. 26 intentus] corr. intra lin. ex intendit 28 quia] illegibile sed rescr. supra lin. 36 Arguitur] quia add. sed del.

Confirmatur secundo. Cuilibet humili videtur quod *vix primum gradum perfectionis* sit *adeptus*. Sed magnanimus non sic videtur nec pertinet ad magnanimitatem, sed ad pussillanimitatem. Ad probationem negatur minor. conf<sup>r</sup>

Ad probationem negatur quod dicit Geraldus, *quod vere humilis habet modum* r(e)<sup>r</sup>  
 5 graue, quia *leo extra pugnam uel venationem in communi modo se habendi habet modum graue et motum tardum et grauem et vocem grauem et solidam et non mutat gressum propter latratum canum uel occursum terribilium ferarum. Modo sic humilis grauis et non leuis in voce uel in motu. Hec enim sunt signa mentis bene compositae et non mutatur ad latratum hominum latrancium uel etiam comminantium, quia humiles sunt, non timidi.*  
 10 *Parum enim timent perdere quod contemnunt. quia contemnunt omnia super quibus potest fieri comminatio. Ideo comminationem talem non timent. Sic etiam veri magnanimi habent animum ad sola magna anime, que non possunt faciliter perdere.*

Ad secundum responditur: *Humilis vilescit sibi ipsi secundum unam comparationem, sic etiam magnanimus vilescit sibi ipsi secundum unam comparationem et secundam aliam comparationem dignificat sibi ipsi.* ad 2<sup>m</sup>  
 15 *Et placet unde humilis comparans se ipsum, ut eum, qui bene passus est ad deum, qui benefecit ei et multa bona contulit ei, vilescit in conspectu dei. Et hoc modo etiam sibi vilescit omnis magnanimus, qui beneficiatus existens, verecundatur de illo, quod beneficiari est superexcessi et beneficiare superexcedentis. Sed autem humilis comparans se quantum nunc cum virtute et*  
 20 *humilitate verum ad illud quod sine humilitate valeret. In hoc sibi non vilescit, sicut nec magnanimus, imo in hac comparatione multum se dignificat, sicut et magnanimus.*

Ad tertium negatur argumentum quod hoc videatur pertinere ad pussillanimitatem. Argumentum probatur. Licet *humili vix* videatur quod primum gradum perfectionis attigerit, tamen videtur sibi quod attigerit, sicut in simili bene ad 3<sup>m</sup>  
 25 sequitur, ille vix sedet, ergo sedet. Quod hoc autem modo videatur humili, *hoc prouenit ex eo quod humilis comparat illud quod fecit et est ad illud quod facere et quod potest esse. Et hoc* videtur sibi valde modicum esse et sic videtur sibi valde modicum *fecisse*, propter hoc, quia *in infinitum potest cum gratia dei et bonum et valorem suum augere.* | [cf. Gerald of Odo, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 28] 190<sup>r</sup>

30 Dubitatur ex quo (?) magnanimitas est virtus moralis et quelibet virtus moralis sit moderatiua passionum, quarum passionum magnanimitas sit moderatiua? du<sup>r</sup>

Respondetur, quia magnanimitas immediate moderatur illas passiones spei et desperationis, quia *omnis virtus est moderatiua immediate* illarum passionum, per *quas immediate* itur (ad) *vitia sibi opposita. Sed per spem excessiuam statim itur in*  
 35 *kaymotem et per desperationem immediate itur in pussillanimitatem.*

Dubitatur secundo, an solum moderatur passiones in appetitu sensitiuo uel du<sup>r</sup>  
 etiam in appetitu intellectiuo uel in utroque?

Respondetur quod *immediate moderatur spem et desperationem siue sint in appetitu sensitiuo* quam *intellectiuo, quia utrobique possunt esse (bone) et male.* Nam circa  
 40 honorem sunt passiones in appetitu sensitiuo, scilicet circa honorem, qui est

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1 *gradum*] beneficij *add. sed del.* 3 pussillanimitatem] argumentum probatur q... (?) *add. sed del.* | minor] *corr. in marg. ex maior* 11 *timent*] perdere *add. in marg.* 18 *quod*] beneficiari est quod *add. sed del.* 20 *In*] *nova lin.* 23 *humili*] *corr. ex humilis* 26 *et est*] *intra lin.* | *quod*] *fecit add. sed del.* 26–27 *et ... esse*] *et—esse in marg.* 34 *immediate*] *rasura add.*

res honorabilis, scilicet victoria. Modo ex victoria bene causatur passio, que est *in appetitu sensitivo*, quia *circa talem honorem, qui sequitur disciplinam*, non causatur passio in appetitu sensitivo. Tunc proprie spes et desperatio solum sunt in voluntate, licet inproprie sunt in appetitu sensitivo, sicut alie virtutes. Et sic habetur ad questionem quod magnanimitas est virtus moralis. Pulchra articulata tangit .b., que conspice. [cf. Gerald of Odo, *In Ethicorum* IV q. 26] 5

Et sic habetur ad questionem quod magnanimitas est virtus moralis. Pulchra articulata tangit .b., que conspice.

Unlike classic scholastic questions, the transcript does not include a solution (*corpus articuli*). Solutions were instead presented by the master in the lecture sessions. The order of the arguments (*argumenta*) and the corresponding proofs (*probationes*) also differs from the classic form of scholastic questions. The arguments and replies are not all grouped together at the beginning and the end, respectively, but appear in different sections. Thus the nine arguments and replies belonging to our question are spread over four sections. The structure of these sections is highlighted in the margin of the manuscript; at the beginning of each section, Augustine put an abbreviation for *arguitur* (*ar<sup>r</sup>*).

The first section contains two arguments taken from the fifth argument of Buridan's commentary; the letter 'b' (.b.), for Buridan, appearing between two points. The notes show that Wölfel followed Buridan closely, albeit in an abbreviated form. Several scribal errors suggest again that the transcript was taken down in the classroom in a hurried fashion. Sometimes, the bachelor misunderstood what Wölfel said, e.g., when writing *fieri* for *viri* (German makes no difference in the pronunciation of v and f, which makes it all the more probable that the source of Augustine's mistake was the spoken word).

The second section comprises one argument, likewise based mainly on Buridan, but which alludes to the work of Thomas Aquinas as well; the quotations of Aristotle all go back to Buridan. In order to prove that a physical disposition is no moral virtue, the commentary introduces a syllogism that seems rather defective, followed by a quotation from Buridan. The section ends with a *notandum*, which faithfully reproduces the corresponding reply in Aquinas's article.

The third and fourth sections are of greater interest because they contain arguments that do not appear in either Aristotle or Buridan. Naturally, Aristotle was unfamiliar with the Christian concept of

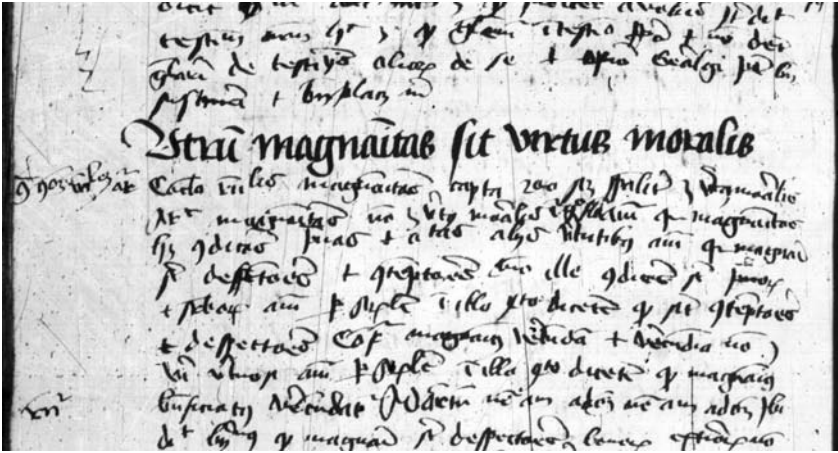
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1 Modo] spes dep... (?) *add. sed del.* 3 et] sp... (?) *add. sed del.*

humility, and Buridan avoided discussing its relation to magnanimity. Though Wölfel and his bachelors generally followed Buridan, the question makes clear that the comparison of magnanimity and humility attracted their main interest, as in the case of other Viennese masters and bachelors who treated our question. The third section begins with a close paraphrase of Aquinas's fourth argument of the corresponding question in the *Summa theologiae*. Wölfel then adds two arguments from Aristotle (following Buridan). His first answer might be the most original passage in the entire question: Wölfel claims that humility and magnanimity are the same habitus, even if they are distinct according to others (*licet secundum alios sint duo habitus*).

The fourth and last section is longer and more complex than the other three. As usual, Augustine demarcated the beginning of the section with *arguitur* (*ar*<sup>r</sup>). Two additional arguments supporting the first argument are marked with *confirmatur* (*conf*<sup>r</sup>). The reply to the first argument is indicated with an abbreviation for *responditur*, the replies to the second and third arguments are marked with *ad 2<sup>m</sup>* and *ad 3<sup>m</sup>*. At the end of the question two *dubitationes* appear, both indicated by the abbreviation for *dubitatur* (*du*<sup>r</sup>). The three arguments and replies as well as the *dubitationes* were taken from the commentary of Gerald of Odo, which was well known in Vienna, and who is referred to in Augustine's transcript as *Geraldus*. As in the previous sections, Wölfel followed his sources word by word, without developing any independent thoughts or observations.

The second copybook, written by the bachelor Simon, displays a similar structure. Like Augustine, Simon carefully structured the question with marginal notes. The text closely resembles Augustine's transcript. Every single argument or reply is paralleled in it:



Thomas Wölfel de Wuldersdorf, *Disputata quinque Ethicorum* (reportatio Simonis), MS St. Florian, Stiftsbibliothek XI.636, f. 215<sup>v</sup>–217<sup>v</sup>

#### VTRUM MAGNANIMITAS SIT VIRTUS MORALIS?

9<sup>a</sup> 903  
rn<sup>le</sup>3 ar<sup>r</sup>

Conclusio responsalis: Magnanimitas capta secundo modo, scilicet specialiter, est virtus moralis. Arguitur sic. Magnanimitas non est virtus moralis. Igitur conclusio falsa.

5

Argumentum probatur, quia magnanimitas *habet condiciones prauas et oppositas aliis virtutibus*. Argumentum probatur, *quia magnanimi sunt despectores et contemptores*, modo ille condiciones sunt prauorum et superborum. Argumentum probatur per Aristotelem in illo quarto dicentem quod sint contemptores et despectores. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 arg. 5]

10

Confirmatur. *Magnanimus verecundatur et verecundia non est viri virtuosus*. Argumentum probatur per Aristotelem in illo quarto dicentem quod *magnanimus beneficiatus verecundatur*. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 arg. 5b]

rn<sup>r</sup>

Ad argumentum negatur argumentum. Ad probationem negatur argumentum. Ad probationem ibi dicit Byridanus quod *magnanimi sunt despectores bonorum exteriorum, non simpliciter, sed in quantum repugnant operibus virtuosis*, et etiam dicuntur *contemptiui*, scilicet *adolationum, timorum et uniuersaliter omnium, que possent a virtute et a veritate abducere. Sed non sunt contemptiui dei nec hominum, nisi malorum*. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5a]

15

Ad secundum argumentum negatur quod verecundetur. Ad probationem dicit Byridanus quod ipse *non habet verecundiam, sed solum habet quamdam similitudinem cum verecundo, quia sicut iuuenis retrahit se a malis per verecundiam, sic etiam magnanimus reddit se tardum ad minores bonas operationes*,

20

3 responsalis] contra conclusionem responsalem arguitur *add. in marg. sin.* 4 sic] contra conclusionem responsalem arguitur *in marg.*

quia principaliter intendit maximis operationibus bonis et quia *beneficiare est melius quam beneficiari* et *magnanimus beneficiatus quasi inde verecundaretur quod in opere virtutis excellitur ab altero et statim retribuit alteri* | beneficianti sibi. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5b] f. 216<sup>r</sup>

5 Arguitur sic: Dispositio corporalis non est virtus moralis. *Sed magnanimitas est dispositio corporalis*. Igitur non est virtus moralis. Argumentum probatur, quia *virtus moralis est* in mente et in anima. Igitur non est dispositio corporalis. Minor probatur, quia *magnanimitas habet* proprietates et corporales condiciones. Igitur est dispositio corporalis. Tenet consequentia, quia proprietates corporales et  
10 conditio corporalis pertinent ad dispositionem corporalem. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 arg. 3 and Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 arg. 3]

Ad argumentum negatur minor quod sit dispositio corporalis. Ad probationem conceditur, quod habet proprietates et condiciones corporales, sed magnanimus non est tales proprietates et condiciones. Et dico quod aliquid (?)  
15 quod habet proprietates et condiciones, est bene virtus moralis, quia dicit Byridanus cum *potentie anime superiores, cum fuerint perfecte per virtutes sibi debitas* perfecte habent *regulare potencias inferiores*. Et ergo *non est inconueniens virtuti attribuere tales proprietates* uel condiciones siue *ab illa potentia, in qua illa virtus consistit*. Et sunt tales condiciones, scilicet *motus lentus, vox grauis, sermo verus et stabilis* et ponderosus.  
20 [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 3]

Et *velocitas motus prouenit ex eo quod homo ad multa intendit, que explere festinant*. *Sed magnanimus intendit solum ad magna, que sunt pauca, que etiam indigent magna et tarda cogitatione et deliberatione, et ideo habet motum tardum*. *Similiter acuitas et velocitas precipue competit hiis, qui de quibuslibet intendere volunt, quod non pertinet ad magnanimos, qui se ad pauca intromittunt*. Et sicut *predicte proprietates corporales conueniunt magnanimis secundum motum (!) affectionis eorum; ita etiam in magnanimis, qui sunt naturaliter dispositi ad magnanimitatem, tales proprietates naturaliter inueniuntur*. [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 ra. 3]  
25

Item. *Nulla virtus moralis opponitur alteri virtuti. Sed magnanimitas opponitur virtuti*.  
30 Igitur argumentum probatur, quia *magnanimitas opponitur humilitati*, et humilitas est virtus moralis. Argumentum probatur, quia *magnanimus reputat se magnis et maximis dignum*, humilis autem habet motum contrarium. [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 arg. 4]

Item. Magnanimus *non habet in memoria eos, a quibus est bene passus* et per consequens *videtur esse ingratus* et vitiosus. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 arg. 5c]  
35

Item. Magnanimus est *tardus, piger, ociosus, inuitiosus*. Argumentum probatur per Aristotelem in isto quarto. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 arg. 5d]

Ad argumentum negatur argumentum. Ad probationem negatur argumen-  
40 tum. Ad probationem ibi dico quod idem est humilis et magnanimus; | et sic f. 216<sup>v</sup>

1 bonis] maximis *add. sed del.* 8 et] dispositiones *add. sed del.* 19 condiciones] condiciones magnanimitatis *add. in marg.* 24 non] *intra lin.* 25 qui] magnanimi *add.* | corporales] *intra lin.*



refutat etiam honores magnos uno tempore et appetit alio tempore secundum dictamen recte rationis. Et humilitas et magnanimitas sunt unus habitus in re, qui sic diuersimode inclinant. Alii dicunt quod sunt diuersi habitus in uno et stant bene simul. Sed tamen videntur *tendere ad contraria*, quia humilitas inclinatur ad refutandum honores secundum dictamen recte rationis et magnanimitas inclinatur ad acceptandum honores secundum dictamen recte rationes. Igitur. 5

Ad aliud negatur argumentum quod non habet eos in memoria, sed Aristoteles vult, quod magnanimus *non habet eos in memoria, a quibus bene passus est, ut bene paciatur, sed habet eos in memoria, ut eis retribuatur et eis beneficiatur*. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5c] 10

Ad aliud dico quod *non ociosus*, nec tardus nec *piger proprie, sed habet quandam similitudinem* cum ociositate et pigritia et tarditate. Nam ipse *intentus ad maiores operationes videtur quasi obliuisci* de minoribus operationibus, *que sepius occurrunt*; et ex quo non decet magnanimo *operari aliqua ex impetu*. Igitur non operatur, *nisi mature et cum magna deliberatione*, et *propter hoc dicitur secundum aliquos tardus* 15 uel *piger* attributiuè. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5d]

ar<sup>r</sup> Item arguitur sic. Humilitas non stat simul cum magnanimitate. Igitur dicta non stant. Argumentum probatur, quia *humilis non habet modum et motum leoninum in gestu*, et *magnanimus habet modum leoninum in gestu*. Igitur non stant simul. Tenet consequentia, (quia) habent conditiones contrarias; et conditiones con- 20 trarie non stant simul in eodem subiecto.

Item. *Humilis vilescit sibi. Magnanimus autem non vilescit sibi*. Argumentum probatur, quia est una conditio humilitatis, quod appareat sibi ipsi esse vilis secundum dictamen recte rationis, sed hec non est conditio magnanimi.

Item. Cuilibet humili videtur quod *vix primum gradum perfectionis sit adeptus*. Et 25 hoc non pertinet ad magnanimitatem, sed ad pusillanimitatem. Argumentum probatur, quia hoc est se reputare valde paruum et minimis honoribus dignum.

rn<sup>r</sup> Ad argumentum negatur argumentum. Ad probationem ibi negatur minor quod humilitas non habet modum leoninum in gestu. Respondetur (?) enim, quando dicit Geraldus, quia *leo extra pugnam et venationem in communi modo se 30 habendi | habet motum tardum et grauem et vocem grauem et solidam et non mutat gressum propter latratum canum uel propter occursum terribilium bestiarum. Sic etiam humilis grauis non leuis in motu, grauis et non leuis in voce*, quia mature et pauca loquitur et non ridet ad omnia verba. *Hec enim sunt signa mentis bene compositae et non mutatur ad latratum hominum latrancium uel etiam comminantium, quia humiles sunt non timidi. 35 Parum enim timent perdere quod contempnunt, quia contempnunt omnia super quibus potest fieri comminatio. Ideo comminationem parum timent. Sic etiam veri magnanimi habent animum ad sola magna animi, que non possunt in vita perdi.*

Ad alium argumentum dico quod *humilis vilescit sibi ipsi* secundum unam comparisonem, sic etiam magnanimus vilescit sibi secundum unicam compa- 40 rationem et secundum aliam comparisonem dignificat et placet bene sibi ipsi.

3 sic] di...de add. sed del. 5 rationis] intra lin. 7 quod] quod iter. sed del | habet] (= autem?) add. sed del. 8 quod] iter. 11 aliud] add. intra lin. 35 non] t...di add. sed del.

Vnde *humilis comparans se ipsum, ut eum, qui bene passus est ad deum, qui benefecit ei et multa bene (!) contulit ei, vilescit in conspectu dei. Et hoc modo etiam sibi omnis magnanimus, qui beneficiatus existens, verecundatur quod superatus est a benefaciente. Sed humilis comparans se quantum nunc cum virtute et humilitate verum ad illud quod sine virtute et sine humilitate valeret. In hoc non vilescit sibi, sicut nec magnanimus. Sed dignificat et placet sibi ipsi, sicut magnanimus.*

Ad aliud argumentum tertium negatur minor, quod hoc pertinet ad pusillanimitatem. Argumentum probatur: Licet *humili* vix videtur quod primum gradum perfectionis attigerit, tamen videtur sibi quod eum attigerit, sicut in simili sequitur, ille vix sedet, igitur sedet. Quod hoc modo autem videatur humili quod vix attigerit primum gradum perfectionis, *provenit ex hoc quod humilis comparat illud quod fecit et quod est, ad illud quod potest facere et potest esse. Et hoc modo vix videtur ei aliquid boni fecisse uel esse, propter hoc, quia in infinitum potest cum gratia dei et bonum valorem suum augeri.* [cf. Gerald of Odo, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 28]

15 Dubitatur ex quo (?) quilibet virtus moralis debet esse moderatiua passionum, quarum passionum sit magnanimitas moderatiua?

Ibi dico quod immediate est moderatiua spei et desperationis, quia *omnis virtus immediate moderatur illas passiones, per quas immediate itur ad vitia sibi opposita. Sed per spem statim | itur in caymotem et per desperationem statim in pusillanimitatem.* f. 217<sup>v</sup>

20 Item dubitatur, an moderatur magnanimitas passiones in appetitu intellectiuo tantum?

Ibi dico quod *immediate moderatur spem et desperationem siue sint in appetitu sensitiuo siue in intellectiuo, quia utrobique possunt esse <bone> et male.* Nam circa honorem sunt passiones in appetitu sensitiuo, scilicet circa honorem, qui est res honorabilis, 25 scilicet victoria. Vnde ex victoria bene causatur passio *in appetitu sensitiuo, quia circa talem honorem, qui sequitur disciplinam, non causatur passio in appetitu sensitiuo.* [cf. Gerald of Odo, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 26]

Corollarium: Questio est vera.

The structure of the question is now clear enough. But what was the underlying method of teaching that produced this and the previous document? Did the master dictate the text or did the bachelors play an active role, as the Statutes demand? To what extent did the exercises involve free discussion? The first step in answering these questions is to see whether anything can be learned from comparing the two manuscripts, given the fact that they were made independently from each other and were not revised afterwards with the help of written sources.

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3 *existens*] *vered...* *add. sed del.* 15 *Dubitatur*] *quid moderetur magnanimitas add. in marg.* 19 *in*] *pusali...* (?) *add. sed del.*

*Disputata quinque Ethicorum* (reportatio Simonis) (see above, p. 302, l. 3 – p. 303, l. 3)

Conclusio responsalis: Magnanimitas capta secundo modo, scilicet specialiter, est virtus moralis. Arguitur sic. Magnanimitas non est virtus moralis. Igitur conclusio falsa. Argumentum probatur, quia magnanimitas *habet conditiones prauas et oppositas aliis virtutibus*. Argumentum probatur, *quia magnanimi sunt despectores et contemptores*, modo ille conditiones sunt prauorum et superbiorum. Argumentum probatur per Aristotelem in illo quarto dicentem quod sint contemptores et despectores. Confirmatur. *Magnanimus verecundatur et verecundia non est viri virtuosus*. Argumentum probatur per Aristotelem in illo quarto dicentem quod *magnanimus beneficiatus verecundatur*. Ad argumentum negatur argumentum. Ad probationem negatur argumentum. Ad probationem ibi dicit Byridanus quod *magnanimi sunt despectores bonorum exteriorum, non simpliciter, sed in quantum repugnant operibus virtuosis*, et *etiam dicuntur*

*contemptiui*, scilicet *adulationum, timorum et uniuersaliter omnium, que possent a virtute et a veritate abducere. Sed non sunt contemptiui dei nec hominum, nisi malorum.*

Ad secundum argumentum negatur, quod verecundetur. Ad probationem dicit Byridanus quod ipse *non* habet verecundiam, *sed* solum *habet* quamdam similitudinem cum verecundo, quia *sicut iuuenis retrahit se a malis per verecundiam*, sic etiam *magnanimus reddit se tardum ad minores bonas operationes*, quia principaliter intendit maximis operationibus bonis et quia *beneficiari est melius quam beneficiari et magnanimus beneficiatus quasi inde verecundaretur, quod in opere virtutis excellitur ab altero et statim retribuit alteri beneficienti sibi.*

*Exercitia librorum Ethicorum* (reportatio Augustini) (see above, p. 296, ll. 2–12)

Conclusio responsalis. Magnanimitas capta secundo modo, ut est specialis virtus; tunc est virtus moralis. Arguitur sic. Magnanimitas non est virtus moralis. Ergo conclusio falsa. Argumentum probatur, quia magnanimitas *habet conditiones prauas oppositas aliis virtutibus*. Argumentum probatur, *quia magnanimi sunt despectores et* etiam *contemptores*, et ille sunt conditiones prauae. Argumentum est Aristotelis in illo quarto.

Confirmatur. *Magnanimus verecundatur*, verecundari autem non est *viri virtuosus*. Argumentum probatur per Aristotelem quarto huius dicens *magnanimus beneficiatus verecundatur*. Ad probationem negatur. Ad probationem negatur. Ad probationem ibi dicit .b., *quod magnanimi sunt despectores bonorum exteriorum, non simpliciter, sed in quantum repugnant operibus virtuosis*, id est in quantum hominem inpediunt ab operibus virtuosis, et *sunt contemptores, scilicet adulationum, timorum et uniuersaliter omnium, que possent seducere a bonis. Sed ipsi non sunt contemptiui dei siue hominum, nisi malorum ratione suarum maliciarum.*

Ad secundum negatur argumentum. Ad probationem pro Aristotele respondet .b. quod ipse *non* habet verecundiam, *sed dicitur verecundari* propter similitudinem, quia oportet ipsi verecundari, quia *reddit se tardiore ad operationes minoris honestatis*, quia ipse intendit principaliter operationibus maximis virtuosis. Et etiam propter hoc, quia *beneficiari est melius (quam) beneficiari*, sed *magnanimus beneficiatus quasi inde verecundaretur, quod in opere virtutis exceditur ab alio et propter hoc, quia statim retribuit*, sed tamen non verecundatur.

(see above, p. 297, ll. 22–24) Ad argumentum negatur minor quod sit dispositio corporalis. Ad probationem conceditur quod habet proprietates et conditiones corporales, sed magnanimus non est tales proprietates et conditiones et dico quod [autem quod] habet proprietates et conditiones, est bene virtus moralis, quia dicit Byridanus ....

(see above, p. 303, ll. 12–16) Ad argumentum negatur minor.  
Ad probationem concedo quod habet tales proprietates, sed non est ille proprietates et negatur quod ergo non sit virtus moralis, nam dicit .b.,

The two independent transcripts are quite similar; in places their wording is even identical. By simultaneously reading both transcripts, we can detect missing words, transpositions, synonyms, rewordings, and sometimes even additional comparisons or explanations. Sometimes one bachelor spells out the complete syllogism, where the other just writes: *igitur* or *etc.* In other instances, one bachelor repeats the argument of Aristotle, whereas the other contents himself with providing a citation to the book under discussion. Quotations—which comprise most of the text—are rendered more or less faithfully in both manuscripts, although they sometimes have the character of paraphrases. The notes most closely resemble each other when the bachelors reproduce quotations verbatim, either from Buridan, Aquinas, or Gerald. We must conclude that these quotations were dictated slowly and faithfully from a manuscript so that the bachelors could write them down correctly. A greater range of variation can be found in the syllogisms that precede the quotations.

The notes of the exercise differ considerably from those taken at the lecture. Although the word ‘lecture’ suggests a public reading, there was actually far more reading from manuscripts during the disputation than during the lecture. While the lecture was not dictated and probably not even based on a script, the exercise was, more or less, a dictation based—as we shall see—on transcripts of previous classes. Its main purpose was to prove and confirm the conclusions of the lecture through extended quotations. The lecture was a presentation of Buridan’s position according to his conclusion (*corpus articuli*) and replies (*ad rationes*). The exercise was a disputation in which Buridan’s arguments were articulated in the form of syllogisms and confirmed by quotations of other authorities.

Despite the fact that both transcripts have a common source in the spoken word, it would be artificial to collate them to create a single text. Nevertheless, the evidence of a third transcript, probably copied around 1450, shows just how close the transcripts must be to his actual words:

*Quaestiones super I–V libros Ethicorum Aristotelis*, MS Vienna, ÖNB 4672, ff. 132<sup>r</sup>–133<sup>r</sup>

## VTRUM MAGNANIMITAS SIT VIRTUS MORALIS?

Conclusio Byridani: *Magnanimitas est virtus moralis.*

¶ Contra istam questionem. ¶ Arguitur sic: Magnanimitas non est virtus moralis. Igitur conclusio falsa. Argumentum probatur, quia magnanimitas *habet conditiones prauas et oppositas aliis virtutibus*. Argumentum probatur, *quia magnanimi sunt despectores et contemptores exterioris honoris quod seruiunt virtutibus*. Argumentum est Aristotelis in isto quarto. 5

¶ Confirmatur. *Magnanimus verecundatur*, sed *verecundia non est viri virtuosus*. Argumentum est Aristotelis in quarto quod *magnanimus verecundatur de beneficio*. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 arg. 5] 10

¶ Ad argumentum negatur argumentum. Ad probationem negatur argumentum. Ad probationem respondet Byridanus quod *magnanimi sunt despectores bonorum exteriorum, non simpliciter*, sed in quantum repugnant *operibus virtuosis*, et dicuntur *contemptiui*, scilicet *adulationum, et uniuersaliter omnium, que possent a veritate et virtute seducere*. Sed *non sunt contemptiui dei neque hominum, nisi malorum*. 15 [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5a]

¶ Ad confirmationem negatur argumentum quod verecundatur. Ad probationem dicitur quod *non habet verecundiam simpliciter, sed dicitur verecundari*, quia *habet* quandam similitudinem cum verecundo, quia *sicut iuuenis verecundus retrahit se a malo propter verecundiam*, sic *magnanimus reddit se tardum ad operationes minoris bonitatis uel honestatis*, quia ipse principaliter intendit operibus virtuosis maximis. ¶ Item *beneficari melius est quam beneficiari* et *magnanimus beneficiatus quasi inde verecundaretur quod in opere virtutis alter excellit ipsum*, propter quod *statim retribuit* sed tamen non verecundatur. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5b] 20

¶ Arguitur sic: Dispositio corporalis non est virtus. Sed *magnanimitas est dispositio corporalis*. Igitur non est virtus. Minor probatur, quia *magnanimitas habet proprietates et dispositiones corporales*. Igitur est dispositio corporalis. Tenet consequentia, quia proprietates et conditiones corporales pertinent ad dispositionem corporalem. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 arg. 3 and Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 arg. 3] 25

¶ Ad argumentum negatur minor. Ad probationem conceditur quod *magnanimitas habet tales proprietates corporales*, sed non est dispositio corporalis. Ad probationem negatur consequentia, ymo aliquid quod habet proprietates corporales bene est virtus moralis. ¶ Nam dicit Byridanus, *quod potentie anime superiores, cum fuerint perfecte per virtutes sibi debitas, habent regulare potentias inferiores*. 30 Et igitur *non est inconueniens attribuere virtuti proprietates corporales, non tamen elicitas, sed regulatas ab illa virtute uel potentia, in qua talis virtus existit*. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 3]

¶ Et est notandum quod *velocitas motus prouenit ex eo quod homo ad multa attendit, que explere festinat. Sed magnanimus attendit solum ad magna, que sunt pauca, que etiam* 35 *indigent magna intentione*. Igitur habent *motum tardum*. ¶ *Similiter acuitas vocis et*

*velocitas precipue competit hiis, qui de quibuslibet intendere volunt, quod non pertinet ad magnanimos. Et sicut predictae proprietates conueniunt magnanimis secundum motum affectionis eorum, ita etiam est in istis magnanimis, qui sic a natura sunt dispositi ista opera citius magnanimitatis expleat.* [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 5 II.II.129.3 ra. 3]

¶ Arguitur sic. *Nulla virtus moralis opponitur alteri virtuti. Sed magnanimitas opponitur alteri virtuti. Igitur non est virtus moralis. Minor probatur, quia opponitur humilitati, et humilitas est virtus moralis. Argumentum probatur, quia magnanimus reputat se maximis et magnis dignum, humilis autem habet motum contrarium, quia humilis non reputat se dignum maximis et etiam contempnit honores.* [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 arg. 4]

¶ Item. *Magnanimus non habet in memoria illos, a quibus est bene passus, et sic est ingratus et per consequens vitiosus. Argumentum est Aristotelis in quarto huius.* [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 arg. 5c]

¶ Item est piger, tardus, ociosus. Igitur vitiosus. Tenet consequentia per Aristotelem in quarto huius. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 arg. 5d]

¶ Ad argumentum negatur argumentum. Ad probationem dicitur quod idem est humilis et magnanimus. Et sic magnanimus reputat se esse dignum honoribus sibi pertinentibus | et refutat honores sibi indebitos, quia idem habitus secundum dictamen recte rationis inclinatur ad aliquid acceptandum et inclinatur ad refutandum illud secundum alia iudicia. ¶ Alii dicunt quod magnanimitas sit aggregatum ex pluribus habitibus, tamen puto quod sit unus habitus, humilitas et magnanimitas, ut patet consideranti. Et nota quod licet magnanimitas et humilitas videantur tendere ad contraria, tamen non sunt ad contraria, quia appetere honores debitos et fugere indebitos non sunt contraria. f. 133<sup>v</sup>

¶ Ad confirmationem negatur argumentum quod non habet illos in memoria. Ad probationem dicitur quod vult quod magnanimus non habet in memoria eos, a quibus bene passus est, ut quoniam (?) bene paciatur, sed habet eos in memoria, ut eis retribuatur et beneficiatur. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5c]

¶ Ad confirmationem dicitur quod non est ociosus, nec piger, nec tardus proprie, sed habet quandam similitudinem cum ociositate et pigritia et tarditate. Nam ipse intentus ad maiores operationes quasi videtur obliuisci minores que sepius occurrunt.

¶ Consequenter dicit Buridanus quod non decet magnum operari ex impetu, ideo nichil operatur, nisi cum deliberatione et maturitate, et propter hoc dicitur esse tardus et piger et tamen non est piger, nec tardus. [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5d]

¶ Arguitur sic. Humilitas non stat cum magnanimitate. Igitur illa dicta sunt falsa. Argumentum probatur, quia magnanimus habet motum et modum leoninum in egestu, sed humilitas non. Igitur non stant (sunt?) simul. Tenet consequentia, quia habent condiciones contrarias magnanimitas et humilitas; et condi-

19 indebitos] et sic aliter et aliter h.... etc. *add. sed del.* 27 argumentum] ad probationem *add.*

tiones contrarie non stant simul, quia conditio magnanimi est modum habere leoninum in egestibus, sed humilitatis non, et ille sunt conditiones contrarie. Igitur.

¶ Confirmatur. Humilitas (!) *vilescit sibi. Magnanimus autem non vilescit sibi.* Igitur argumentum probatur, quia homo est conditio humilitatis, quod vilescit sibi ipsi. 5

¶ Item cuilibet humili videtur quod *vix unum gradum perfectionis sit adeptus.* Et hoc non pertinet ad magnanimitatem, sed ad pusillanimitatem. Argumentum patet, quia hoc est facere se valde paruum.

¶ Ad argumentum negatur argumentum. Ad probationem ¶ respondetur 10 negando minorem quod humilitas non habet modum leoninum in egestu, ymo habet, quia *leo extra venationem et pugnationem in communi modo se habendi habet motum grauem et tardum et vocem solidam et non mutat gressum propter latratum canum uel occursum terribilium bestiarum.* Sic humilis est grauis et non leuis in motu, grauis et non leuis in voce. *Hec enim sunt signa mentis bene compositae et non mutatur ad latratum hominum latrantium uel etiam comminantium, quia humiles sunt, non timidi. Parum enim time(n)t perdere quod contempnunt, quia contempnunt omnia super quibus potest fieri comminatio. Ideo comminacionem parum timent.* Sic etiam magnanimi habent bonum animum ad sola magna vera anime, que non possunt perdere in vita. 15 20

¶ Ad secundum argumentum respondetur quod *humilis vilescit sibi ipsi* secundum unam comparationem, sic etiam magnanimus. Et secundum aliam comparationem dignificat se ipsum et placet sibi ipsi. Vnde *humilis comparans se ipsum, ut eum, qui bene passus est ad deum, qui benefecit ei et multa bona contulit ei, vilescit in conspectu dei. Et hoc modo sibi vilescit omnis magnanimus, qui beneficiatus existens, 25 verecundatur, quia beneficiari est superexcessi et benefacere superexcedentis.* ¶ Sed *humilis comparans se ipsum quantum nunc cum virtute et humilitate valet (!) quod id quod sine virtute et humilitate valeret. In hoc sibi non vilescit, sicut nec magnanimus, ymo in hac comparatione multum se dignificat.* [cf. Gerald of Odo, *In Ethicorum* IV q. 28]

[f. 133<sup>r</sup> follows verbatim Buridan's conclusion followed by the first reply to the fifth 30 argument]

The name of the scribe of this third transcript, which lacks the *probatio* of the third argument and the two *dubitationes*, is unfortunately unknown; the manuscript does not include a single colophon. A comparison with the notes of Augustine and Simon proves, however, that it is a copy of an independent transcript which sometimes resembles that of Simon more closely, sometimes that of Augustine. The differences between the transcripts are mostly minor and include the usual variations between different recordings of the same speech: rewordings, missing words, missing steps in a syllogism, etc.

*Disputata quinque Ethicorum*  
(reportatio Simonis)  
(see above, p. 304, ll. 7–16)

Ad aliud negatur  
argumentum quod non habet  
eos in memoria,  
sed Aristoteles vult  
quod magnanimus *non*  
*habet eos in memoria, a quibus*  
*bene passus est, ut*  
*bene paciatur, sed habet eos in*  
*memoria, ut eis retribuatur et*  
*eis beneficiat.*

Ad aliud dico quod  
*non ociosus, nec tardus nec piger*  
*proprie, sed habet*  
*quandam similitudinem cum*  
ociositate et pigritia et  
tarditate. Nam ipse *intentus ad*  
*maiores operationes*  
*videtur quasi obliuisci de*  
minoribus operationibus *que*  
*sepius occurrunt;* et ex quo

non decet magnanimo  
*operari aliqua ex impetu. Igitur*  
non operatur, *nisi mature et*  
*cum magna deliberatione, et*  
*propter hoc dicitur secundum*  
aliquos *tardus* uel *piger* attribuitur.

*Exercitia quinque Ethicorum* (reportatio  
Augustini)  
(see above, p. 298, ll. 21–30)

Ad aliud negatur  
argumentum.

Ad probationem  
pro Aristotele dico quod vult  
tamen quod magnanimus *non*  
*habet in memoria eos, a quibus*  
*bene passus est, ut sic*  
*bene paciatur, sed habet eos in*  
*memoria, ut eis retribuatur et*  
beneficiat.

Ad aliud negatur quod sit  
ociosus, etc.,  
sed ad illum sensum, quia habet  
*quandam similitudinem cum*  
ociositate et pigritia et  
tarditate. Nam ipse *intentus ad*  
*maiores operationes* et  
*quasi videtur obliuisci de*  
minoribus operationibus *que*  
*sepius occurrunt.* Et sic dicitur  
esse *ociosus.* Consequenter dicitur  
esse *piger, quia non decet magnum*  
*operari magis ex impetu, ideo*  
*nichil operatur, nisi mature et*  
*cum magna deliberatione*  
et *propter hoc dicitur esse*  
*piger.*

*Quaestiones super I–V libros Ethicorum*  
*Aristotelis*  
(see above, p. 309, ll. 27–36)

Ad confirmationem negatur  
argumentum quod non habet  
illos in memoria. Ad probationem  
dicitur quod vult  
quod magnanimus *non*  
*habet in memoria eos, a quibus*  
*bene passus est, ut quoniam (?)*  
*bene paciatur, sed habet eos in*  
*memoria, ut eis retribuatur et*  
beneficiat.

Ad confirmationem dicitur quod  
*non est ociosus, nec piger, nec*  
*tardus proprie, sed habet*  
*quandam similitudinem cum*  
ociositate et pigritia et  
tarditate. Nam ipse *intentus ad*  
*maiores operationes*  
*quasi videtur obliuisci*  
minores *que*  
*sepius occurrunt.*

Consequenter dicitur Byridanus,  
quod non decet magnum  
*operari ex impetu, ideo*  
*nichil operatur, nisi*  
*cum deliberatione et maturitate, et*  
*propter hoc dicitur esse*  
*tardus et piger* et tamen non est  
*piger, nec tardus.*

A comparison of these transcripts enables us to demonstrate how well the three bachelors grasped the exercise and how faithfully they recorded the spoken word. While Simon and Augustine both rendered faithfully the *conclusio responsalis*, the anonymous scribe merely notes: *Conclusio Byridani: Magnanimitas est virtus moralis.* Thus he left out the clause, recorded by Augustine and Simon, that magnanimity was a moral virtue “understood in a secondary sense” (*capta secundo modo*). In doing so, the anonymous bachelor neglected an important peculiarity of Wölfel’s treatment of the question, which distinguished his commentary from those of other masters in the same faculty. Another example: Augustine does not mention the comparison between the veneration of the magnanimous with that of young people. Yet it is evident that this comparison was mentioned in the classroom, because Augustine’s two fellow-students noted it. A final example: Thomas Aquinas is never explicitly referred to in the *notandum* of the second section. We may therefore assume that his name was not mentioned in this connection in the classroom.



The exercises were by no means discussions where the master or the bachelors were free to invent new arguments. Every argument that appears in the transcripts can be traced back to written sources. In our case, we can attribute 43 % of the text to Gerald of Odo, 38 % to Buridan, 10 % to Aquinas, and 8 % to independent or unidentified sources. These unidentified passages appear principally in the third section of the *dubitatio*, where the question is raised whether magnanimity and humility are the same habitus. The reply given to this question cannot be found in any of three main sources (Buridan, Aquinas, and Gerald). Apparently, Wölfel expressed himself more freely and perhaps did not rely here on a particular written source. Below, I will try to show that the reply to this question was drawn from Wölfel's lecture and was based on statements made in other Viennese commentaries on the *Ethics*.

*Disputata quinque Ethicorum*  
(reportatio Simonis)  
(see above, p. 303, l. 39 – p. 304, l. 6)

Ad argumentum negatur argumentum. Ad probationem negatur argumentum.  
Ad probationem ibi dico quod idem est humilis et magnanimus. Et sic refutat etiam honores magnos uno tempore et appetit alio tempore secundum dictamen recte rationis.

Et humilitas et magnanimitas sunt unus habitus in re, qui sic diuersimode inclinant. Alii dicunt quod sunt diuersi habitus in uno et stant bene simul.

Sed tamen videntur tendere ad contraria, quia humilitas inclinat ad refutandum honores secundum dictamen recte rationis et magnanimitas inclinat ad acceptandum honores secundum dictamen recte rationes. Igitur.

*Disputata quinque Ethicorum*  
(reportatio Augustini)  
(see above, p. 298, ll. 11–20)

Ad probationem negatur. Ad probationem negatur.  
Ad probationem dico quod idem est humilis et magnanimus. Et ipse magnanimus reputat se esse dignum magnis honoribus secundum alia et alia iudicia. Et idem magnanimus inclinat ad refutandum honores minores secundum alia et alia iudicia.

Et sic est unus habitus ipsa magnanimitas et humilitas, licet secundum alios sint duo habitus. Et sic dico quod humilitas et magnanimitas non sunt contraria, quia sunt unus habitus. Sed tamen videntur tendere ad contraria, quia humilis inclinat ad refutandum honores secundum dictamen recte rationis secundum aliqua iudicia, et secundum alia iudicia appetit honores secundum dictamen recte rationis.

*Quaestiones super I–V libros Ethicorum Aristotelis*  
(see above, p. 309, ll. 17–26)

Ad argumentum negatur argumentum.

Ad probationem dicitur quod idem est humilis et magnanimus. Et sic magnanimus reputat se esse dignum honoribus sibi pertinentibus et refutat honores sibi indebitos, quia idem habitus secundum dictamen recte rationis inclinat ad aliquid acceptandum et inclinat ad refutandum illud secundum alia iudicia.

Alii dicunt quod magnanimitas sit aggregatum ex pluribus habitibus, tamen puto quod sit unus habitus, humilitas et magnanimitas, ut patet consideranti.

Et notandum quod licet magnanimitas et humilitas videantur tendere ad contraria, tamen non sunt ad contraria, quia appetere honores debitos et fugere indebitos non sunt contraria.

Unfortunately, our rich evidence does not help us to answer one crucial question: which portions of the exercise can be attributed to the master, which portions to the students? It seems implausible that the master dictated the entire question, since the Statutes expressly require active participation by the bachelors. Hence, even though the exercises were called the *exercitia* or *disputata* of Thomas Wölfel since it is he who gave the class, we should in no way take him for the sole author. He may not even have contributed the main part of the text, although he must have intervened from time to time to respond to particular difficulties. Unfortunately, the manuscripts never indicate whether a certain argument was pronounced or dictated by the master or by a bachelor. Where the notes have *dico* (I say) or *puto* (I believe), the scribe certainly does not refer to himself, because his fellow students use the same expressions at exactly the same points. Neither should one attribute all statements involving the first person singular to the master, since the bachelors alternatively write *dico* and *dicitur*, suggesting that the statements were derived from some written source or pronounced by another person in class (every section of the exercise may actually have been presented by a different participant). The exercises were a special kind of class, where bachelors had the opportunity to formulate syllogisms and assemble arguments from various traditional authorities. As we shall see in the next section, it was neither Wölfel nor the bachelors who chose to include arguments from Thomas Aquinas and Gerald of Odo in addition to the standard material drawn from Buridan's commentary. Even this was prescribed by tradition.

A final word should be said on the relation of the lecture to the exercise. Wölfel's lecture differed in two respects from Buridan's presentation. First, the master was required to formulate a *conclusio responsalis*—in this case, the statement that Aristotle (as mediated by Buridan) considers magnanimity a specific, not a general virtue. Second, Wölfel added the remark that humility and magnanimity are the same *habitus*. Both elements recur in the exercise. Wölfel may have taken the opportunity to elaborate on the remarks he made in his lecture. The reference to an opposing opinion (*alii dicunt*) hints at a controversy within the faculty.

4. *Thomas Wölfel's exercise in comparison with the classes on magnanimity held by other Viennese masters*

The originality of Wölfel's teaching on magnanimity may be measured by comparing his class with classes on the same topic held earlier and later in the Faculty. Our comparison must be limited to the exercises, since transcripts of lectures by other Viennese masters have not survived. The most important are the following, arranged by date:<sup>29</sup>

- 1410 Sebald Messner of Wallsee, *Disputata super libris quinque Ethicorum Aristotelis*, MS Melk, Stiftsbibliothek 59 (548), 224 ff.<sup>30</sup>  
 1423 Thomas Ebendorfer of Haselbach, *Collecta super I–V libros Ethicorum Aristotelis* (autograph), MS Vienna, ÖNB 4952, ff. 1<sup>r</sup>–200<sup>r</sup><sup>31</sup>  
 1429 Urban of Melk, *Disputata super quinque libros Ethicorum* (autograph), MS Vienna, ÖNB 4667, ff. 1<sup>r</sup>–243<sup>r</sup><sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> See the lists of Flüeler, "Ethica in Wien", 123–129 and Müller "Wiener Ethikkomentare", 000–000. My work on these commentaries allows me to add two remarks to these lists. First, the anonymous *Quaestiones abbreviatae super I–V libros Ethicorum Aristotelis*, MS Vienna, ÖNB 5330 (anno 1396), ff. 1<sup>ra</sup>–193<sup>vb</sup> (Flüeler, "Ethica in Wien", 123 nr. 1) simply contains Buridan's commentary; the restriction to books 1–5 shows that it was copied for teaching purposes. Second, the Viennese origin of MS Vienna, ÖNB 4784 (Flüeler, "Ethica in Wien", 130 nr. 24) gets more probable, because it refers at f. 50<sup>v</sup> to a distinction made by several Viennese masters: "Nota. Humilis est pars magnanimitatis".

<sup>30</sup> Flüeler, "Ethica in Wien", 123 nr. 4; for his activities at the University of Vienna, see *ibid.*, 120 n. 82. The manuscript has the following colophons: "Et hoc est finis tercii libri. Finitus est hic liber tercius Ethicorum in die festiuitatis sancti Georgii martyris anno etc. 11<sup>mo</sup>" (25 April) (f. 175<sup>v</sup>); "Et sic est finis disputatorum Reuerendi magistri Sebaldi de Walse quarti libri Ethicorum" (f. 214<sup>v</sup>). The commentary ends at the beginning of book 5, question 13 (f. 229<sup>r</sup>). The date on f. 175<sup>v</sup> is Thursday 23 April 1411. This would suggest that this commentary is a transcript of Sebald's first course on the Ethics in 1410–1411 and not of the later one of 1414–1415. Vinzenz Staufer, *Catalogus codicum manu scriptorum qui in bibliotheca monasterii Mellicensi O.S.B. seruantur* (Vienna, 1889) reads "anno etc. 17<sup>mo</sup>". Staufer's date was adopted by all scholars including myself in "Ethica in Wien". The handwriting of this manuscript is however a *bastarda*; the second number indicating the year is in fact a 1 with an upstroke of the pen. I thank Father Gottfried Glaßner (Stiftsbibliothek Melk) for looking carefully with a magnifier at the date. In my view, the date refers to the day when the exercises on the third book were finished. That day may well be near the end of April, as we know from other Viennese commentaries on the *Ethics*; Jodok Weiler finished the exercises on the third book on 30 April 1440, Thomas Wölfel on 4 May 1439.

<sup>31</sup> Flüeler, "Ethica in Wien", 124. The title is according to the colophon on f. 200<sup>r</sup> where the commentary is called "collecta".

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* (nr. 6a).

- Disputata super I–V libros Ethicorum Aristotelis*, MS Vienna, ÖNB 4914, ff. 1<sup>r</sup>–344<sup>v33</sup>
- Quaestiones super I–V libros Ethicorum*, MS Munich, UB 4° 685, ff. 1<sup>r</sup>–368<sup>v34</sup>
- 1432 Andreas of Weitra (?), *Disputata super questionibus Byridani quinque librorum Ethicorum Aristotelis*, MS Vienna, ÖNB 5149, ff. 1<sup>r</sup>–284<sup>r</sup>
- 1438 THOMAS WÖLFEL OF WULDERSDORF
- 1439 Jodok Weiler of Heilbronn, *Exercitia super quinque libros Ethicorum Aristotelis* (reportatio Henrici Strömberger), MS Graz, UB 883, ff. 1<sup>r</sup>–251<sup>r35</sup>
- 1447 Andreas Wall de Walczhaim, *Disputata quinque librorum Ethicorum Aristotelis*, MS Munich, BSB clm 18883, ff. 3<sup>r</sup>–225<sup>r36</sup>
- 1454 Stephanus de Brugen, *Quaestiones super libros Ethicorum Aristotelis* (reportatio Iohannis Ysenhut), MS Melk, Stiftsbibliothek 801 (823), ff. 1–186<sup>37</sup>
- 1459 Andreas Schärding, *Exercitia super quinque libros Ethicorum Aristotelis* (autograph), MS Munich, BSB clm 18458, ff. 2<sup>r</sup>–163<sup>r38</sup>
- Quaestiones super I–V libros Ethicorum Aristotelis*, MS Munich, BSB clm 11478, ff. 1<sup>r</sup>–238<sup>v39</sup>
- s.d. Anonymus, *Quaestiones super I–V libros Ethicorum*, MS Vienna, ÖNB 4703, f. 66<sup>r</sup>–366<sup>r40</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid. (nr. 6b). I can now confirm that this is a direct copy of MS Vienna, ÖNB 4667.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. 128 (nr. 16). The exemplar of this mid-fifteenth-century MS cannot have been MS ÖNB 4667, but a copy close to MS ÖNB 4914, because both have the same homoioteleuton in the fifth section of our question. The commentary has sometimes a different wording at the beginning of the sections. Some parts are missing, such as the last three sentences of the second section (*Hoc confirmatur—redarguuntur*, see below, p. 000), the complete fourth section, and the last paragraph of the fifth section with Gerald of Odo's definition of magnanimity. It is therefore difficult to say if this manuscript is just a rather free copy of Urban's *Disputata* (more probable in my opinion) or a copy of an exercise in another year based slavishly on Urban (less probable in my opinion).

<sup>35</sup> Probably an original student notebook of the bachelor Heinrich Strömberger. The question on magnanimity is quite different from the main tradition presented in this case study. Another study would be required to show the making of this commentary and its sources.

<sup>36</sup> Flüeler, "Ethica in Wien" 128 (nr. 15).

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. 129 (nr. 17).

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. (nr. 18).

<sup>39</sup> Probably a direct copy of the autograph preceding in our list. The date in Flüeler, "Ethica in Wien", 130 has to be corrected to 1469 or after. The watermark is similar to Gerhard Piccard, *Die Ochsenkopf-Wasserzeichen*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart, 1966), nr. XIII 499–500 (1469/70, Kirchheim–Neckar, Braunschweig).

<sup>40</sup> Flüeler, "Ethica in Wien", 129 nr. 19. The question on magnanimity first presents

Some of these manuscripts, including the commentaries of Andreas Wall and Stephanus de Brugen, perhaps also those of Jodok Weiler and Sebold Messner, are original notebooks, while others were written by the masters themselves, such as the *Collecta* of Thomas Ebendorfer, the *Disputata* of Urban of Melk (MS ÖNB 4952), and the *Exercitia* of Andreas Schärding (MS BSB cdm 18458). My admittedly selective reading of the question on magnanimity in the exercises suggests that all fifteenth-century Viennese commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics* rely on each other. Moreover, all masters refer, like Thomas Wölfel, to Thomas Aquinas and Gerald of Odo in addition to their standard source, John Buridan's commentary on the *Ethics*.

Particularly influential in the Viennese commentary tradition were the *Disputata* of Urban of Melk. Urban lectured on the *Ethics* in 1429, nine years before Wölfel. In the autograph manuscript he notes that he started teaching on Friday 13 October 1429 and held his last exercise on Saturday 22 September 1430. His commentary is a compilation of sources, as Wölfel's exercise is, albeit with a slightly different blend: Gerald is the most frequently cited author with 58 % of the text being derived from his commentary; Aquinas comes second with 21 %, Buridan third with 19 %. Only 2 % of Urban's sources remain unidentified. Since his commentary is twice as long as Wölfel's, it naturally contains more quotations, but still about two-thirds of them appear in Wölfel's text as well. Even more astonishing is the fact that the quotations in the fourth and last section of Wölfel's exercise almost perfectly match the corresponding text of his older colleague. Hence, we must conclude that the bachelors who attended Wölfel's exercises had access to a copy of Urban's commentary in the classroom from which the student leading the class would dictate, at times even word by word, to his fellow bachelors.

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a more or less faithful summary of the *corpus articuli* of Buridan's question, followed by a word by word copy—with some minor alterations—of the second part of Andreas Schärding's commentary. Thus the first part of Andreas's commentary, which renders the conclusion of Conrad Koler, is substituted by a version according to Buridan.

Urban of Melk, *Disputata super V libros Ethicorum* (autograph)

(see below, p. 330, ll. 4–10)

Ad tertium dicendum est negando minorem.

Vnde licet *humili vix* videatur quod primum gradum perfectionis attigerit, tamen videtur *sibi*, quod eum attigerit, sicut bene sequitur, ille *vix cecidit*, ergo cecidit. Quod autem hoc modo videtur humili, scilicet quod vix attigerit primum gradum perfectionis, hoc *prouenit* ex hoc, quia *humilis comparat illud, quod fecit et quod est ad illud, quod facere et esse potest. Et hoc modo vix videtur ei aliquid boni fecisse uel esse, propter hoc, quia in infinitum potest gratia dei eum et bonum et valorem suum augere.* [cf. Gerald of Odo, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 28]

(see below, p. 332, ll. 19–29)

Et *ad primam* rationem dicit, *quod magnanimitas immediate moderatur spem et desperationem siue sint in appetitu sensitiuo siue intellectiuo, quia utrobique possunt esse et utrobique possunt esse bone et male.* Et ulterius dicit, *quod passiones appetitus intellectiui etiam aduersantur rationi, sicut enim opiniones intellectus sepe contradicunt veritati. Sic etiam passiones voluntatis sepe aduersantur bonitati et rationi.* Et ulterius est dicendum, *quod etiam circa honorem sunt passiones in appetitu sensitiuo, scilicet circa honorem, qui est res honorabilis, scilicet victoria uel triumphus.* Vnde ex victoria *bene* causatur *passio in appetitu sensitiuo*, etiam ipsius bruti animalis, etc. Est tamen verum, quod non circa quemlibet honorem causatur *passio in appetitu sensitiuo*, quia *circa talem honorem, qui sequitur disciplinam*, non causatur *passio in appetitu sensitiuo*. Et hoc vult *Philosophus* in auctoritate allegari. [cf. Gerald of Odo, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 26]

Thomas Wölfel of Wuldersdorf, *Disputata quinque Ethicorum* (reportatio Simonis; quotations from Urban of Melk appear in standard form, quotations from Odo used in Urban are *in italics*, and independent wordings **in bold**)

(see above, p. 305, ll. 7–14)

**Ad aliud argumentum tertium negatur minor, quod hoc pertinet ad pusillanimitatem. Argumentum probatur:** Licet *humili vix videtur* quod primum gradum perfectionis attigerit, tamen videtur *sibi*, quod eum attigerit, sicut **in simili** sequitur, ille *vix sedet, igitur sedet.* Quod hoc modo autem videatur

humili quod vix attigerit primum gradum

perfectionis, *prouenit ex hoc, quod humilis comparat illud, quod fecit et quod est, ad illud, quod potest facere et potest esse. Et hoc modo vix videtur ei aliquid boni fecisse uel esse, propter hoc, quia in infinitum potest cum gratia dei et bonum ualorem suum augeri.*

(see above, p. 305, ll. 22–27)

**Ibi dico quod** *immediate moderatur spem et desperationem siue sint in appetitu sensitiuo siue in intellectiuo, quia utrobique possunt esse (bone) et male.*

**Nam** *circa honorem sunt passiones in appetitu sensitiuo, scilicet circa honorem, qui est res honorabilis, scilicet victoria.* Unde ex victoria *bene* causatur *passio in appetitu sensitiuo,*

quia *circa talem honorem, qui sequitur disciplinam*, non causatur *passio in appetitu sensitiuo.*

Urban's *Disputata* remained the standard commentary in the Faculty of Arts for several decades. It was used by others besides Thomas Wölfel, as testifies an exercise contained in MS ÖNB 5149, written in 1432, when Andreas of Weitra was teaching the *Ethics*. The question on magnanimity in this manuscript is almost identical to the version that appears in Urban's commentary, except that nearly all quotations from Buridan are omitted; there are additional quotations from Ger-

ald's commentary; and another *dubium* is included. One might infer from these facts that the master preferred Aquinas and Gerald to Buridan, but the opposite is true! Our commentary explicitly prefers Buridan to Aquinas: *in certis (modis) clariorem (!) ponit Buridanus exponendo illas et alias proprietates magnanimi, quas vide in questione presenti* (see below, p. 338, ll. 1–2). This remark should serve as a warning against the assumption that the choice of quotations reveals the doctrinal position of the master or bachelors. In fact, what best characterizes the approach of the anonymous commentary is not its omission of quotations from Buridan, but the way it restructures and expands Urban's text with more extended quotations from Gerald of Odo. It is likely that the master or bachelor in charge of the exercise used a copy of Gerald's commentary, or a derivative of it, in the classroom.

The bachelors of Andreas Wall, who lectured in 1447, relied even more heavily on Urban's *Disputata*. They paraphrased the first ten arguments from it in their original order and at the end of the question inserted a quotation from Buridan that appears word for word in Urban's text. The first two sections of Stephanus de Brugen's exercises, jotted down in the classroom by the bachelor Johannes Ysenhut in the academic year 1454–1455,<sup>41</sup> likewise reveal Urban's prevailing influence; only the last section draws on another source, namely, the commentary of Jodok of Heilbronn, who lectured one year after Thomas Wölfel, in 1439–1440.<sup>42</sup> But even Urban's commentary followed in the steps of earlier commentaries. Six years before Urban, in 1423, the famous historian Thomas Ebendorfer was granted permission to teach the *Ethics*. His autograph commentary is titled *Collecta*, which suggests that it was composed after the exercises were held. Ebendorfer refers to the same authors as Urban and his epigones, namely, Buridan, Aquinas, and Gerald, but collected different arguments from these sources, like picking different apples from the same apple-tree.

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<sup>41</sup> The commentary ends on f. 186v: "Per me fratrem Iohannem Ysenhut baccalau-  
reum a magistro Stephano Bruggen. Scriptus infra octauam apostolorum Petri et Pauli  
anno 1455. Wiene. Hic est Ethicorum liber" (Sunday 29 June 1455).

<sup>42</sup> According to the acts of the faculty, Jodok received the right to teach the following  
books: 1419 *secundam partem Grecismi*, 1420 *Donatum*, 1421 *Algorismum de integris*, 1422 *De*  
*anima*, 1423 *libros Priorum*, 1424 *Elencorum*, 1425 *Veterem artem*, 1426 *Summam Iovis*, 1427 *libros*  
*de generatione et corruptione Aristotelis*, 1428 *De generatione*, 1429 *secundum et tertium tractatum Petri*  
*Hyspani*, 1431 *Parva logicalia*, 1432 *libros Phisicorum*, 1433 *De anima*, 1434 *Parva naturalia*, 1435  
*libros Priorum*, 1437 *Posteriorum*, 1438 *De anima*, 1439 *libros Ethycorum*, 1440 *sextum Ethycorum*.  
He received the permission to teach the *Ethics* after teaching for twenty years at the  
faculty, at a moment when he already had his theological license.

A new generation using a slightly different mix of sources began with the commentary of Andreas Schärding. Andreas registered as a student in 1434 and began teaching as a master in the Faculty of Arts in 1441. In 1456 he was granted permission to lecture on the *Ethics*, a book which he taught again in 1459. A version in his own hand of his second course survives in MS BSB clm 18458. The first part of the question on magnanimity is directly copied from the commentary made by Conrad Koler of Soest at the University of Heidelberg.<sup>43</sup> This lengthy commentary was purchased by the Faculty of Arts in Vienna in 1444,<sup>44</sup> and traces of its use can already be found in the commentary of Andreas Wall, written in 1446–1447, which more or less summarizes Urban's *Disputata*. The definition of magnanimity included under the heading *notandum* corresponds to Conrad's definition. We can conclude, then, that the Viennese commentaries were not only influenced by the classical commentaries of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries but assimilated traditions from other Central European universities as well.

Apart from differences in structure and sources, responses to the *dubium* about whether magnanimity and humility are the same habitus indicate the originality of our commentaries (as far as the question on

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<sup>43</sup> Conrad Koler of Soest (Conradus de Susato), *Quaestiones super libris Ethicorum*, MSS Munich, UB 2° 565 (anno 1469); Vienna, ÖNB 5317, ff. 1<sup>ra</sup>–346<sup>rb</sup> (5 more MSS are known). Mieczysław Markowski, “Die wiederaufgefundene ursprüngliche Fassung des Kommentars des Marsilius von Inghen zur Nikomachischen Ethik des Aristoteles”, in *Philosophie und Theologie des ausgehenden Mittelalters: Marsilius von Inghen und das Denken seiner Zeit*, ed. Maarten J.F.M. Hoenen and Paul J.J.M. Bakker (Leiden, 2000), 175–195, attributes the second MS on doctrinal grounds to Marsilius of Inghen. Müller, “Wiener Ethikkommentare”, corrects the mistake by showing that the MS is a copy of books 1 to 5 of Koler's long commentary. I can confirm this by my investigation of book 4, question 11: both MSS contain the same text. Conrad's commentary was often confounded with Buridan's. Three surviving MSS contain an attribution to Koler, e.g. MS Munich, UB 2° 565, f. 1r: “In isto libro continentur questiones magistri conradi de susato super libros ethicorum aristotelis” (written by the owner of the MS, Georg Zingel, who was a master in Vienna before he went to Ingolstadt); see Bernd Michael, “Buridans moralphilosophische Schriften, ihre Leser und Benützer im späten Mittelalter”, in *Das Publikum politischer Theorie im 14. Jahrhundert*, ed. Jürgen Miethke (Munich, 1992), 148 n. 40. Natalia Daniel, Gerhard Schott, and Peter Zahn, *Die lateinischen mittelalterlichen Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek München* 3.2 (Wiesbaden, 1979), 87–88 assume that the MS was written in Vienna and came later with Georg Zingel to the Arts Faculty of the University of Ingolstadt.

<sup>44</sup> The purchase is recorded in the Acts of the Faculty: “... comparate sunt eciam questiones ethicorum magistri Conradi de Susato, olym episcopi Ratisponensis, et repositae sunt ad librariam in kathena” (MS Vienna, Archiv der Universität Wien, AFA II, f. 164<sup>r</sup>). I thank Sigrid Müller for this information.



magnanimity is concerned). The first commentary to deal explicitly with the *dubium* was the *Disputata* of Sebold Messner of Wallsee, who lectured in 1410–1411. In his view, humility is the same habitus as magnanimity, or in any case a mode of it; others assert (*alii vero dicunt*) that humility is a part of magnanimity, and that magnanimity has many subordinate habitus. It is uncertain whether Sebold's commentary first introduced this distinction, but later commentators used it. Thomas Ebendorfer quotes it, specifying that magnanimity and humility, though one habitus, differ *secundum rationem*; the Vienna Anonymus (Andreas of Weitra?) cites parts of it; and Thomas Wölfel's commentary is strongly influenced on this point by both Sebold and Ebendorfer. The many references to the opposite view (*alii vero dicunt, aliter tamen tendendo, sed secundum aliam opinionem, secundum alios*) seems to indicate that the *dubium* was disputed for a long time in Vienna. However, since no extant commentary defends the opposite view (all of them actually reject it), I presume that it was a mere notional standpoint that masters and bachelors used to formulate their own view—or rather, to defend the view sustained by several generations of Viennese arts masters.

### 5. *Conclusions*

The aim of this study was to reconstruct a single lecture and its corresponding exercise from a course on Aristotle's *Ethics* in fifteenth-century Vienna. A first conclusion is that although Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* was the standard textbook for teaching ethics, no one actually lectured on it in the Arts Faculty. Instead, the masters used John Buridan's commentary on Aristotle's work. In their lectures the masters only treated the first six books with 143 questions, since one academic year was too short to cover all ten books and 211 questions. The master outlined Buridan's conclusions and replies without referring to other commentaries and without settling conflicting arguments. Nevertheless, this did not prevent him from occasionally adding personal remarks. The master spoke freely, in such a way that it was difficult for the bachelors to take full notes. The few surviving sets of notes from the lectures show that the bachelors contented themselves with jotting down *brevia* which enable us to describe the content and structure of the lecture.

In addition to the 143 lectures, the masters were required to hold exercises in private rooms for their bachelors. The subject of these exercises were the questions previously treated in the lectures. The aim

of the exercises was to verify the *conclusio responsalis* that the master had articulated in his lecture by scrutinising a range of counter-arguments. The bachelors were required to participate actively at the exercises, that is, to formulate syllogisms and to corroborate these with arguments and replies taken from Buridan and other authoritative commentators. Moreover, the bachelors and the master had the opportunity to expand on remarks made during the lecture.

Notes were taken with great care during the exercises. Arguments were recorded word for word, which indicates that the bachelors and the master dictated them from a written source. The bachelors must have brought manuscripts into the classroom and slowly read out the arguments. Often these manuscripts were not copies of the original sources, but contained the notes of previous classes taken by bachelors who worked on the same questions and quoted from the same sources. This practice explains why notes from exercises on the *Ethics* survive in such great amounts; notes of lectures had no such practical use for the bachelors. Moreover, the practice explains the strong interdependency of the fifteenth-century Viennese commentaries on the *Ethics* during several decades. We must understand the lectures and exercises as a highly scholastic training with a traditional choice of arguments, repeated year after year until a new paradigm was adopted, which a future generation of bachelors and masters might follow in turn.

The master played an active role in the exercises, but his arguments were not labeled as his in the students' notes, so that we can only conjecture from a careful comparison between the lectures and exercises what the master himself argued in his course. An individual commentary tells us little or nothing about the personal views of the master to whom the commentary is attributed. But a group of related commentaries from the same school can reveal a common approach to a set of questions. Thus we have been able to show that the exercise on magnanimity, although based on Buridan's commentary, shared very little with Buridan's approach. The main concern of Viennese teaching on magnanimity was its relation to humility, a virtue that Buridan did not treat at all. The *dubium* about whether humility and magnanimity are the same habitus was discussed as an open issue, dominated by arguments from authors of the *via antiqua* (Thomas Aquinas, Gerald of Odo)—even though the University of Vienna as a whole is considered a bulwark of the *via moderna*, to which Buridan belonged.

We have shown that Thomas Wölfel's lectures and exercises were similar to those of other Viennese masters in structure as well as con-

tent. Teaching ethics at the Faculty of Arts followed a fixed pattern for a long time in the fifteenth century, and all extant commentaries from the period are interrelated. It is legitimate to ask whether the teaching methods in other arts faculties were similar. Did the famous and important Aristotle commentaries of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, written at leading universities such as Oxford or Paris, originate in the same way, similarly depending on previous classes given at the same faculties and involving a similar use of sources? On the one hand, it is evident that the form of the commentaries changed significantly during the later Middle Ages. The great variety by which commentaries are designated from the thirteenth century in titles and colophons reflects a similar variety in terms of their production and usage.<sup>45</sup> *Brevia, dicta, disputata, puncta, collecta*, and *concepta* all point to different forms of teaching or different ways of editing the notes. On the other hand, commentaries on the same book written at the same school in the same period are often strongly interdependent, presenting striking similarities in their structure and arguments. In order to understand these commentaries, we must study them in their institutional context. What most medieval commentaries have in common is the fact that they are linked to university teaching; understanding the practices of teaching makes the production and *functioning* of these commentaries more intelligible.

Medieval commentaries, especially Aristotle commentaries produced and used at universities, can be studied in different ways. Most scholars make editions on the basis of one or several manuscripts in order to move quickly into the highlands of intellectual history, jumping from one mountain top to another.<sup>46</sup> Usually these scholars are aware of the difficulties of working with transcribed texts, but they consider the process by which commentaries were produced a black box, impenetrable to the researcher. As a result, they content themselves with general

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<sup>45</sup> For a first, imperfect attempt to catalogue these designations, see Christoph Flüeler, "Die verschiedenen literarischen Gattungen der Aristoteleskommentare: Zur Terminologie der Überschriften und Kolophone", in *Manuels, programmes de cours et techniques d'enseignement dans les universités médiévales*, ed. Jacqueline Hamesse (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1994), 75–116.

<sup>46</sup> Intellectual history (Geistesgeschichte) as mountaineering from top to top was defended by Friedrich Meinecke, *Die Entstehung des Historismus*, ed. Carl Hinrichs (Munich, 1965), 6: "Will man aber das Allgemeine des Hergangs und das Individuelle seiner Ursprünge eindrucklich miteinander verbinden, so bleibt nur übrig, eine Art Gratwanderung durch das Gebirge anzutreten und von einem der hohen Gipfel zum anderen hinüberzustreben".

observations on the institutional context of the commentaries in a way that does not challenge their interpretations. The present case study has tried to develop a different approach by investigating the making of a commentary from its beginnings as an oral lecture to its final recording in the surviving manuscripts, as well as by studying its connection to other commentaries from the same institution. I hope that future studies which use medieval Aristotle commentaries will more carefully consider the effect that the tradition of teaching may have had on the conclusions at which their sources arrive.

## APPENDIX

Seboldus Messner de Wallsee, *Quaestiones super I–V libros Ethicorum Aristotelis*, MS Melk, Stiftsbibliothek 59 (548), f. 200<sup>r</sup>

## VTRUM MAGNANIMITAS SIT VIRTUS MORALIS?

Contra conclusionem responsalem. Magnanimitas repugnat humilitati. Igitur non est virtus. Tenet consequentia, quia nulla virtus alteri repugnat. Maiorem probatur, quia inclinant ad opposita, una ad contemptum honorum, alia ad prosecutionem honorum. 5

Respondetur negando maiorem. Ad probationem negatur maiorem intelligendo de oppositis secundum bonitatem et malitiam, nam idem homo bene prosequitur certos honores et certos contempnit. 10

Ideo sciendum quod idem habitus est magnanimitas inquantum inclinatur ad appetendum atque prosequendum honores magnos uel maximos quos oportet et quomodo et sic de aliis circumstantiis, et humilitas inquantum inclinatur ad contempnendum honores quos oportet et quando et sic de aliis circumstantiis. Vnde quamquam homo certus sit maxime dignus honore, tamen non expedit semper honorari, ut visum est de excellentissimis sanctis, qui honorem mundanum fugierunt; uel saltem magnanimitas inclinatur ad utrumque et sic humilitas esset modus magnanimitatis. Alii vero dicunt, quod humilitas sit pars magnanimitatis et quod magnanimitas sit multi habitus partiales quibus homo bene se habet circa honores et honorationes et inhonorationes, scilicet appetendo et dirigendo se, quibus est dignus, ut recta ratio dicat, et refutando quibus non est dignus et ad bene se habendum, quando magni honores, quibus dignus est, sibi non exhibentur. 15 20

Ad idem. Magnanimitas est iustitia. Igitur non est specialis virtus distincta contra alias.

Maiorem probatur, quia vitium sibi oppositum, scilicet caymotes, opponitur iustitie. Igitur etc. 25

Notandum. Non est inconueniens ad idem opus plura vitia concurrere, sed forte non eque principaliter. Exemplum, ut si cupiens honores principaliter intendat alteri nocere et consequenter honores appetit uel prosequitur, iniustus est principaliter et secundario est caymotes. Si autem principaliter intendit honores et consequenter vult ex hoc alteri nocere, tunc est principaliter caymus et secundario iniustus; et sic idem vitium potest diuersis opponi virtutibus, sed tamen caymotes, prout precise opponitur magnanimitati, solum inclinatur ad prosequendum excessiue absque alterius nocimento ipsos honores. 30

Item. Si quis appeteret honores, qui omnino transcendunt suum statum ut diuersos honores, iterum faceret contra magnanimitatem et iustitiam. Hic potest introduci de gradibus humilitatis et superbie, sed illud in eo videri est 35

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17 et] *supra lin.*

transcendere considerationem huius libri, qui est uniuersaliter de moribus, ut patet in prologo et sequentibus questionibus primi, et ideo transeo. Et illa puto sufficere visis diligenter hiis, que in questionibus sunt.

Thomas Ebendorfer de Haselbach, *Collecta super I–V libros Ethicorum Aristotelis*, MS Vienna, ÖNB 4952, ff. 160<sup>v</sup>–161<sup>v</sup>

#### VTRUM MAGNANIMITAS SIT VIRTUS MORALIS?

5 Contra notabilem primum, ubi dicitur quod per magnanimitatem in proposito intelligitur habitus specialis moderans passiones appetitus circa honores et inhonorationes.

Arguitur quod sic: Vel ergo moderaret passiones circa paruos honores uel circa magnos uel circa utrosque. Non primum, quia phylotomia illud facit; nec  
10 circa secundum, quia magnum et paruuum accidit honorari. Ergo de ratione magnanimitatis non est quod sit circa paruos uel magnos.

Confirmatur, quia paruus honor minus distat a magno honore quam inhonoratio. Sed magnanimus bene se habet circa inhonorationem, ergo etiam circa paruos honores. Igitur non solum circa magnos.

15 Respondetur quod est circa passiones refrenantes magnos honores. Ad probationem conceditur, sed tamen magnum et paruuum magnam faciunt differentiam secundum quod comparantur ad rationem, et ad modum seruandi conformaret dictamini recte rationis, multo etiam obseruatur difficilius modus in magnis honoribus quam in paruuis.

20 Ad confirmationem dicitur quod argumentum bene probat quod magnanimus potest bene uti paruuis honoribus sicut magnis. Sed est circa magnos sicut quibus dignus est, et in eis non antecedens extollitur, quia non reputat eos supra se, sed magis eos contempnit et multo magis moderatos quam paruos. Et similiter etiam de honorationibus non frangitur, sed eas contempnit  
25 tanquam illud quod sibi indigne reputat offerri.

Ex alio ad idem. *Magnanimitas non moderatur passiones*. Igitur antecedens patet, quia uel moderaretur passiones appetitus sensitiui uel intellectiui. Non primum, quia circa honorem in appetitu sensitiuo nulla fit in eo passio, ut patet per Aristotelem in isto quarto de temperantia, capitulo primo, dicentem, *amatius honoris gaudet*  
30 *honore nichil patiente corpore, sed magis mente*. Sed *omnis passio appetitus sensitiui fit patiente corpore*; nec secundum, quia ille non aduersatur rationi. Ergo non indigent moderamine. Item respondetur negando antecedens. Ad probationem dicitur, quod magnanimus immediate moderatur spem et desperationem siue sint in appetitu sensitiuo siue intellectiuo, quia utrobique possunt esse et utrobique possunt esse bone et male.  
35 Et quando dicitur quod [non] *passiones intellectiui appetitus non aduersantur rationi*, negatur illud, quia sicut opiniones intellectus sepe contradicunt veritati, sic et passiones voluntatis sepe aduersantur bonitati et rationi. Et sic negatur etiam quod circa honorem

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1 moribus] qui .... moribus *supra lin.* 3 visis] *dig add. sed del.* 32 respondetur] queritur que sint ille passiones, tamen de istis nichil communicat aristoteles de eis *add. in marg.*

*non fit passio in appetitu sensitivo, sed ad Aristotelem dico quod non est circa honorem quolibet modo sumptum, puta circa honorem, qui sequitur disciplinam uel scientiam, uel virtutem, que sensus non apprehendit, sed si sumatur honor pro re honorabili, que est victoria uel triumphus, que bene fit passio ex tali honore in appetitu sensitivo.* [cf. Gerald of Odo, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 26]

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Contra conclusionem responsalem. Magnanimus non est virtuosus; igitur magnanimitas non est virtus.

Antecedens patet, quia *omnis talis est superbus; igitur vitiosus. Probatur omnis contemptor dei et proximi et amator sui est superbus. Sed sic magnanimus est amator sui, quia seipsum magis dignificat, et delectatur adipiscens honores magnos, ymo amat* 10 *propriam excellentiam, ut patet in littera et hoc conuenit superbo.*

Respondetur *quod magnanimus non est superbus, quamuis in multis actibus conueniat quo ad superbiam. Superbus enim amat se ut principium sui, magnanimus ut effectum dei.* Item primus |, scilicet *superbus, amat se ut finem, secundus vero, scilicet magnanimus, ut ordinatus ad finem; et per hoc ille se auertit a deo, iste se conuertit* 15 *ad deum.* Item diuersimode *contempnunt, quia primus contempnit proximum in bono, secundus vero in malo.* Item *magnanimus contempnit in proximo falsam opinionem et falsum iudicium, et malam et irrationalem offensam et irrationale odium. Sic quod nec propter opinionem nec propter iudicium dimittent veritatem, nec propter offensam, nec propter odium declinandum committent aliquam turpitudinem. Superbus vero contempnit offensam rationalem,* 20 *sic quod propter eam non dimitteret vanitatem suam, contempnit etiam aliorum bonos mores et bona opera.* Item *differenter appetunt excellentiam, quia superbus in honoribus fallacibus, magnanimus solum in veris. Item superbus appetit excellere ultra propriam dignitatem, magnanimus vero secundum propriam bonitatem.* [cf. Gerald of Odo, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 27]

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Ex alio. *Nulla virtus moralis repugnat alteri, quia sunt connexe inter se. Sed magnanimitas repugnat humilitati, quia inclinatur ad opposita, scilicet ad contemptum honorum, et magnanimitas ad prosecutionem honorum. Quidam propter hoc dicunt, quod humilitas sit pars magnanimitatis et quod sit magnanimitas multi habitus partiales determinati, quibus homo bene se habet circa honores et inhonorationes, scilicet appetendo et dignificando se quibus est dignus, ut recta ratio dicitur, et refutando, quibus est indignus, et ad bene se habendum, quando honores debiti non impenduntur. Aliter tamen tenendo predicta negatur minor.* [cf. Sebold Messner, p. 324, ll. 2–5, 16–20]

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Respondetur iuxta dicta in precedenti questione, quod humilitas etiam inclinatur ad prosequendum honores, in quantum vergunt ad gloriam dei, sed 35 non in relatione ad defectus proprios. Ex hoc videtur improbable quod magnanimitas sit humilitas, sed differunt ratione. Vnde iste habitus vocatur magnanimitas in quantum inclinatur habentem ad dignificandum se honoribus quibus est dignus. Et eadem virtus dicitur humilitas in quantum inclinatur se ad indignificandum se honoribus quibus suo indiuiduo (?) non est dignus. Vnde humilitas 40 non est habitus inclinans ad refutandum omnes honores indifferenter, quia alias esset vitium et non virtus.

Ex quibus patet quod magnanimitas est habitus electius inclinans ad *rectum, firmum, ac efficax, fiduciale desiderium magni boni* uel quo honore magno dignus est, *per magnam hominis sufficientiam possibilis optineri. Est enim rectum, quia virtuosus;* 45 *et est purum, quia non est vano appetitui permixtum; et est firmum, quia infrangibile per*

*occursum difficultatum; est autem efficax, quia est operatiuum ad desideratum bonum; est autem fiduciale, quia cum fiducia proprie dignitatis et sufficientie diuinitus accepte, per quam magnanimus illi magno bono se dignificat, et exponit secundum mensuram sue possibilitatis.* [cf. Gerald of Odo, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 32]

- 5 Sed conceditur tunc *magnanimitas* esset *eadem cum virtute heroyca*. Falsus est, quia *non est humana, sed diuina*. Probatur consequentia, quia *heroyca secundum Eustratium non est aliud nisi summus gradus in qualibet virtute, ut in phylantropia que est super omnem phylantropum, in temperantia que est super omnem temperatum, in fortitudinem quod est super omnem fortem*. Et ita est de magnanimitate, quia dicit Aristoteles, *vere*  
 10 *magnanimum oportet esse bonum et hominem bonum reddit optimum; unde et magnanimus maximis dignus erit optimus*.

Respondetur negando antecedens saltem secundum se, *quamuis multum conueniat cum ea, puta in hoc quod est tenere summum*. Ad probationem et ad argumentum dicitur quod est *optimus inter bonos bonitate humana, non bonitate heroyca et diuina, quia*  
 15 *illa bonitas excedit omnem bonitatem humanam, tamen ex magnanimitate est immediatus ascensus ad heroyca, sicut a suprema bonitate humana*. [cf. Gerald of Odo, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 29]

Ex alio ad idem quod *habet unam virtutem moralem, habet omnes, sexto Ethicorum*. *Sed aliquis potest habere [magnanimitatem] virtutem sine magnanimitate*. Igitur  
 20 antecedens patet, quia *paruis honoribus dignus et hiis se dignificans, temperatus est, magnanimus autem non, ut dicit Aristoteles in primo capitulo de magnanimitate*. [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 arg. 2]

Respondetur concedendo antecedens inesse perfecto et negatur minor sic. Ad probationem dicitur, quod virtutes non sunt connexe *secundum actus*, ut  
 25 argumentum probat, sed *secundum habitus simul in anima existentes, uel actu, uel in propinqua dispositione*. Et sic possit aliquis possit habere habitum magnanimitatis, cui non competit actus, quia non est in tali statu, tamen per talem habitum *disponitur ad talem actum exequendum, si sibi secundum suum statum conpeteret*, etc. [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 ad 2]

Urbanus de Mellico, *Disputata super quinque libros Ethicorum*, MS Vienna, ÖNB 4667, ff. 188<sup>v</sup>–191<sup>r</sup>

### 30 VTRUM MAGNANIMITAS SIT VIRTUS MORALIS?

Contra responsalem conclusionem, in qua dicitur, quod magnanimitas sit virtus moralis.

Arguitur. *Virtus moralis est quedam qualitas mentis. Sed magnanimitas habet quasdam conditiones siue proprietates corporales*. Igitur *non est virtus moralis*. Minor patet  
 35 auctoritate Philosophi dicens, *quod motus lentus magnanimi videtur, et vox grauis et locutio stabilis*. [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 arg. 3].

Ad hoc argumentum est dicendum negando consequentiam et ulterius dicitur, sicut tangit Byridanus, *quod potentie anime superiores, cum fuerint perfecte per*

12 antecedens] ad probationem *add. sed del.*



*virtutes sibi debitas, habent regulare potentias inferiores, et ergo non est inconueniens virtuti attribuere proprietates siue operationes aliquas corporales, non tamen sicut elicitas, sed sicut regulatas et imparatas ab illa virtute siue ab illa potentia, in qua illa virtus existit.* [cf. Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 3]

Et hec solutio est de intentione Sancti Thomae, qui dicit ad hoc argumen- 5  
tum, quod *corporales motus diuersificantur secundum diuersas anime apprehensiones et affectiones. Et secundum hoc contingit quod ad magnanimitatem consequuntur quedam deter-*  
*minata accidentia circa motus corporales. Velocitas enim motus provenit ex eo quod homo ad*  
*multa intendit que explere festinat. Sed magnanimus intendit solum ad magna que pauca*  
*sunt, que indigent etiam magna intentione, et ideo habet motum tardum. Similiter etiam* 10  
*acuitas vocis et velocitas precipue competit hiis qui de quibuslibet intendere volunt, quod non*  
*pertinet ad magnanimos, qui non intromittunt se nisi de magnis. Et sicut predictae disposi-*  
*tionum corporalium motuum conueniunt magnanimis secundum modum affectionis eorum. Ita*  
*etiam in istis qui sunt naturaliter dispositi ad magnanimitatem, tales conditiones naturaliter*  
*inueniuntur.* [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 ra. 3] 15

Item. *Nulla virtus opponitur alteri virtuti. Sed magnanimitas opponitur humilitati, quod patet, quia magnanimus dignum se reputat magnis et alios contempnit, ut dicitur quarto huius. Sed humilitas habet modum contrarium. Igitur etc.* [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 arg. 4]

Dicendum ad hoc argumentum negando minorem et ulterius dicitur, sicut 20  
tangit sanctus Thomas, *quod humilitas et magnanimitas non sunt contrarie, quamuis in contraria tendere videantur. Quod autem non sint contrarie, declarat sic, quia in homine inuenitur aliquid magnum, quod ex dono dei possidet; et aliquis defectus, qui competit ei ex infirmitate nature. Magnanimitas ergo facit, quod homo magnis se dignificet secundum considerationem donorum que possidet a deo, sicut si habet magnam virtutem.* 25  
*Tunc magnanimitas facit quod ad perfecta opera virtutis tendat, et similiter dicendum est de usu cuiuslibet alterius boni, puta scientie uel exterioris fortune. Humilitas autem facit quod homo se ipsum parumpendat secundum considerationem proprii defectus. Similiter magnanimitas contempnit alios secundum quod deficiunt a donis dei, non enim tantum alios appretiatur quod pro eis aliquid indecens faciat. Sed humilitas alios honorat et superiores* 30  
*estimat, in quantum in eis inspicit aliquid de donis dei. Vnde de viro iusto dicitur in Psalmo: Ad nichilum deductus est in conspectu eius malignus [Ps. 14: 4], quod pertinet ad contemptum magnanimi; timentes autem dominum glorificat, quod pertinet ad honorationem humilis. Magnanimus ergo contempnit homines in quantum sunt peccatores et quasi nichil eos reputat. Humilis autem glorificat homines in quantum habent* 35  
*aliquid de donis dei.* [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 ra. 4]

Ex quibus patet, quod magnanimus non repugnat humilitati, immo omnis magnanimus est vere humilis, quod declarat quidam expositor sic, *quia omnes viri perfecti et sancti participes virtutum Christi fuerunt humiles, Christo eis dicente: Discite a me, quia mitis sum et humilis corde, Mt 11. Sed omnes viri secundum deum vere* 40  
*magnanimi fuerunt perfecti et sancti participes virtutum Christi. Magnanimitas enim non fit sine virtutibus et est ornatu et augmentum earum, et per consequens, qui habent eam, habent virtutes et ornatu et perfectionem et sanctitatem earum, et secundum hoc participant virtutes Christi qui visus est plenus gratie et veritatis, Joh 1, quare omnes*  
f. 189<sup>r</sup> *virī | secundum deum vere magnanimi sunt, vere humiles. Hoc confirmatur per Ysidorum* 45  
*dicentem [Etymologiae 3.42.1b] quod sancti cum multa constantia redarguerunt principum*

*vitia in quibus consumata erat humilitas, in libro De summo bono, capitulo 20, ubi iungit uel iunctam ostendit humilitatis conseruationem cum magnanimitatis summa operatione. Summa namque magnanimitas erat cum periculo mortis constanter assurgere ad redarguendos principes. Ex quibus infert ipse corrolarium quod modernis temporibus nullus est vere magnanimus cum principes summe sint vitiosi et per consequens nimis redarguendi et tamen per nullum redarguuntur. [cf. Gerald of Odo, In Ethicorum 4 q. 28]*

Contra illa dicta arguitur: *Nullus humilis habet modum leoninum in gestu, cum leo sit animal superbum et contemptiuum. Sed magnanimus habet modum leoninum in gestu, ut patet ex eius conditionibus. Igitur etc.*

10 Secundo. *Humilis sibi vilescit, sed magnanimus non. Igitur videtur, quod non stent simul, magnanimitas et humilitas.*

Tertio videtur *quod humili vix primum gradum perfectionis sit adeptus. Sed sic de se opinari pertinet ad pussillanimum et non ad magnanimum; igitur etc. Maior patet auctoritate beati Bernardi dicens quod humilis quanto plus proficit, eo minus se reputat profecisse. Nam si usque ad summum gradum boni exercitii profecerit, aliquid de*  
15 *primi gradus imperfectione relinquatur, ut vix sibi primum gradum videatur adeptus.*

Quarto. *Humilitas est contemptus proprie excellentie, sed magnanimus vult superexcellere, ut dicit Aristoteles; igitur repugnant magnanimitas et humilitas.*

Hec et quedam alia tangit prefatus expositor, ad que dici potest secundum  
20 *eius intentionem. Ad primum negando maiorem, immo omnis vere humilis habet modum leoninum. Leo namque extra pugnam uel venationem suam, in communi modo se habendi, habet motum grauem et tardum et vocem grauem et solidam, et non mutat gressum suum propter latratum canum uel occursum terribilium bestiarum. Sic etiam humilis grauis est et non leuis in motu, grauis et non leuis in voce. Hec enim sunt signa mentis*  
25 *bene compositae, et non mutatur ad latratum hominum latrantium uel etiam conminantium, quia humiles sunt, non timidi. Parum enim timent perdere, quod contempnunt, quia contempnunt omnia super quibus potest fieri conminatio, ideo conminationem parum timent. Sic etiam veri magnanimi habent animum ad sola magna bona anime, que non possunt inuiti perdere.*

30 Ad secundum dicendum est negando minorem. Et ulterius dicendum est, quod humilis quantum ad aliqua sibi vilescit, et magnanimus quantum ad consimilia etiam sibi vilescit. Vnde notandum, quod *humilis secundum duplicem comparationem sibi vilescit et secundum aliam duplicem considerationem sibi non vilescit. Humilis enim comparans se ipsum, ut eum, qui bene passus est ad deum, qui benefecit ei et multa bona contulit ei, vilescit in conspectu dei. Et hoc modo etiam sibi vilescit*  
35 *omnis magnanimus qui beneficiatus existens verecundatur, propter hoc quod beneficiari est superexcessi et beneficiare superexcedentis. Item humilis comparando illud quod nunc valet ad illud quod in futurum valere potest, vilescit sibi. Et hic est modus magnanimi, cui nichil magnum est in comparatione ad illud quod esse potest. Illud ergo sibi vilescere multum*  
40 *excitat hominem humilem ad bene agere. Iterum humilis comparat illud quod est et quod habet ad illud quod fuit et quod habuit ante notitiam sui. Et hoc modo non vilescit sibi, immo se multum dignificans gratias agit deo, a quo accepit illud quod est et quod habet.*

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12 videtur quod humili] quod humili videtur *inv. corr. cum signis* 30 negando] que maiorem et ulterius dicitur *add. sed del.*

*Item humilis comparat quantum nunc cum virtute et humilitate valet ad illud quod deserta virtute sine humilitate valeret, et in hoc non sibi vilescit, sicut nec magnanimus, immo in hac comparatione multum se dignificat, sicut magnanimus.*

Ad tertium dicendum est negando minorem. Vnde licet humili vix videatur, quod primum gradum perfectionis attigerit, tamen videtur sibi quod eum attigerit, sicut bene sequitur, ille vix cecidit, ergo cecidit. Quod autem hoc modo videtur humili, scilicet quod vix attigerit primum gradum perfectionis, hoc prouenit ex hoc, quia humilis comparat illud, quod fecit | et quod est ad illud quod facere et esse potest. Et hoc modo vix videtur ei aliquid boni fecisse uel esse, propter hoc, quia in infinitum potest gratia dei eum et bonum et valorem suum augere.

Ad quartum dicendum est negando consequentiam. Ex ulterius dicendum est, quod humilitas est contemptus proprie excellentie contrarius appetitui superbie, non autem contrarius appetitui magnanimitatis, ymo in eo inclusus, quia magnanimus omnino contempnit excellentiam in honoribus, id est in istis signis et reuerentiis fallacibus. Non enim vult primos accubitus in cenis, nec primas cathedras in synagogis, nec primas salutationes in foro, nec vocari ab omnibus rabbi, sicut faciunt ypocrite, superbi, caymi, ventosi et fumosi. [cf. Gerald of Odo, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 28]

*Item. Cuiuslibet virtutis proprietates sunt laudabiles. Sed magnanimus habet quasdam proprietates vituperabiles. Primo quidem, quia non est memor beneficiorum; secundo, quia est ociosus et tardus; tertio, quia utitur yronia ad multos; quarto, quia non potest aliis conuiuere; quinto, quod magis possidet infructuosa quam fructuosa. Igitur etc. [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 arg. 5 and Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 arg. 5c, d, k, e, g]*

Ad hoc argumentum dicendum est negando minorem. Et ulterius dicendum, sicut tangit sanctus Thomas, quod ille proprietates secundum quod ad magnanimum pertinent, non sunt vituperabiles, sed superexcedenter laudabiles. Quod enim primo dicitur quod magnanimus non habet memoriam eorum, a quibus beneficium recipit, intelligendum est quantum ad hoc quod non est sibi delectabile quod ab aliquibus beneficium recipiat, quin sibi maiora recupenset, quod pertinet ad perfectionem gratitudinis, in cuius actu vult superexcellere, sicut et in actibus aliarum virtutum. Et Buridanus dicit, quod Aristoteles loquitur non in presenti sed in futuro. Habet enim semper in memoria eos quibus beneficiat, et non eos, a quibus bene patitur, quia semper curat beneficiare et non curat beneficiari. Vel dicitur, quod non habeat in memoria eos, a quibus bene passus est, ut iterum bene patiat, sed in memoria habet eos, ut retribuatur. [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 ra. 5 and Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5c]

Secundo dicitur, quod est ociosus et tardus, quod non est intelligendum, quod deficiat ab operando ea que sibi conueniunt, sed quia non ingerit se quibuscumque operibus, sed solum magnis, qualia decent eum. Et de hoc dicit Buridanus, quod magnanimus nec est piger, nec ociosus proprie, sed secundum quandam similitudinem [nam] ad maiores operationes intentus quasi videtur obliuisci minores que sepius occurrunt; ideo videtur ociosus. Item, cum [non] deceat ex impetu magna operari, ideo nichil videtur operari, nisi mature et

1 quantum] in marg. 10 eum] forsan cum gratia dei post corr. 38 ingerit] cuius add. sed del. 40 operationes] intendens add. sed del.

*cum deliberatione, propter quod videtur tardus et piger.* [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 ra. 5 and Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5d]

*Tertio dicitur quod utitur yronia, non secundum quod opponitur veritati, ut scilicet dicat de se aliqua vilia, que non sunt, uel neget aliqua magna, que sunt, sed quia non totam*  
 5 *suam magnitudinem monstrat, maxime quantum ad inferiorem multitudinem, quia dicit Philosophus, quod ad magnanimum pertinet esse magnum ad eos, qui in dignitatibus et in bonis fortunis sunt, ad medios autem moderatum.* Et de hoc Buridanus dicit, quod yronia non opponitur veritati, sed eyronia. Vnde yronia, qua magnanimus utitur, est—*ut aliqui dicunt—veritatis occultatio uel dissimulatio, qua magnanimi utuntur ad multos, scilicet*  
 10 *ad miseros et serviles, ad quos non est dignum suam manifestare magnitudinem, uel—sicut alii dicunt—yronia est reprehensio malorum sub verbis contrarium significantibus per modum indignationis habite de malitia ipsorum, verbi gratia, si quis male operatur, dicimus, vide quomodo tu bene agis, quasi diceremus, tu es valde malus, qua yronia magnanimus utitur ad multos, quia multi sunt mali.* [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 ra. 5 and Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5k]

*Quarto dicitur, quod ad alios non potest conuiuere, scilicet familiariter, nisi ad amicos, quia omnino vitat adulationem et simulationem, que pertinent ad animi paruitatem. Conuiuuit tamen omnibus et magnis et paruis secundum quod oportet.* Et de hoc dicit Buridanus, quod *in rei veritate magnanimus optime viuuit et ad seipsum et ad alium, sed adulatoribus*  
 20 *et multis, qui solum ioca et sensualia solacia affectant. Videtur, quod ipse non possit viuere ad alios. Propter hoc, quod ipse tardus est in iocis et in verbis ociosis et maturus in seriosis, uel dici potest, quod ipse non potest ad alios* <sup>190<sup>r</sup></sup> *quoscumque viuere indifferenter, quia ipse odit adultores et contempnit vitiosos, sed ad amicos et bonos viros ipse optime viuuit.* [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 ra. 5 and Buridan, 25 *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5e]

*Quinto dicitur quod magis vult habere infructuosa non quecumque, sed bona, id est honesta, nam in omnibus preponit honesta utilibus, tamquam maiora. Vilia enim queruntur ad subueniendum alicui defectui, qui magnanimitati repugnant.* Et de hoc dicit Buridanus, quod *magnanimus magis vult possidere infructuosa bona quam fructuosa vulgariter loquendo,*  
 30 *quia illa sunt vere fructuosa, unde modo vulgari Aristoteles vocat possessiones fructuosas, que absque multo labore afferunt magnam pecuniam, infructuosas autem vocat, ubi paucioribus pecuniis existentibus oportet magis labore. Sic enim beneficium ecclesiasticum dicimus fructuosum et liberum, ubi multa pecunia colligitur et non oportet multum seruire deo. Vbi autem oportet sepe diuinis officiis intendere et gratiam rei publice laborare, beneficium*  
 35 *diceretur infructuosum et seruum. Hoc autem ita dicitur, quia vulgus plus reputat pecuniam quam virtutes, per quas tamen solum acquiritur fructus humanus.* [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 ra. 5 and Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5g]

Item. Quelibet virtus moralis est moderatiua aliquarum passionum, ut patet ex secundo huius. Sed *magnanimitas non moderatur aliquas passiones, igitur etiam*  
 40 *minor patet. Primo, quia non moderatur passiones appetitus sensitui, quia circa honorem nulla fit passio in appetitu sensitiuo dicente Aristotele, quod amatius honoris gaudet honore, nichil patiente corpore, sed potius mente, in capitulo de temperantia, sed*

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7 moderatum] ad medios autem moderatum add. in marg. 9 magnanimi] magni 23 et] op[timos] add.

*omnis passio appetitus sensitiui fit patiente corpore; nec etiam moderatur passiones appetitus intellectiui. Tales enim non egent moderamine, cum non aduersentur rationi, sicut passiones appetitus sensitiui. Secundo, quia Philosophus tractans de virtutibus semper ponit passiones per virtutes regulatas. Sed agens de magnanimitate non agit de passionibus per eam regulatis. Igitur etc.* 5

*Tertio. Magnanimitas est operatiua circa omnes materias virtutum moralium, quia est ornatus omnium aliarum virtutum moralium. Sed nulle speciales passiones sunt circa materias omnium virtutum moralium. Igitur etc.*

Ad hoc argumentum dicendum est negando minorem. Et consequenter dicendum est, sicut tangit quidam expositor, quod magnanimitas immediate moderatur spem et desperationem, quod patet, quia omnis virtus immediate moderatur illas passiones, per quas immeditate itur in vitia sibi opposita, sicut patet inductiue in singulis. Sed per spem excessiuam immediate itur in caymotem et per desperationem immediate in pusillanimitatem. Excessus enim spei facit hominem conari ad illud quod est supra vires, supra facultatem, supra dignitatem et supra sufficientiam eius. Hoc autem est conari caymotice. Desperatio autem excessiua facit hominem discedere ab operationibus bonis, quibus et quarum finibus esset dignus et sufficiens. Hec autem vitia sunt immediate opposita magnanimitati, quare ipsa immediate moderatur spem et desperationem. 10

Et ad primam rationem dicit, quod magnanimitas immediate moderatur spem et desperationem siue sint in appetitu sensitiuo siue intellectiuo, quia utrobique possunt esse et utrobique possunt esse bone et male. Et ulterius dicit, quod passiones appetitus intellectiui etiam (non) aduersantur rationi, sicut enim opiniones intellectus sepe contradicunt veritati. Sic etiam passiones voluntatis sepe aduersantur bonitati et rationi. Et ulterius est dicendum, quod etiam circa honorem sunt passiones in appetitu sensitiuo, scilicet circa honorem, qui est res honorabilis, scilicet victoria uel triumphus. Vnde ex victoria bene causatur passio in appetitu sensitiuo, etiam ipsius bruti animalis, etc. Est tamen verum, quod non circa quemlibet honorem causatur passio in appetitu sensitiuo, quia circa talem honorem, qui sequitur disciplinam, non causatur passio in appetitu sensitiuo. Et hoc vult Philosophus in auctoritate allegari. 15

Ad secundum dicendum est negando minorem. Vnde Philosophus distinguens f. 190<sup>v</sup> | magnanimitatem a suis vitis extremis illas passiones satis inuuit, quamuis eas non expresserit. 20

Ad tertium dicendum est negando minorem. Et ulterius dicitur, quod circa omnem materiam virtutis occurrunt generaliter ille due passiones, scilicet spes et desperatio, quod patet, quia circa omne bonum magnum et arduum, difficile et honorabile, et cum difficultate aquisibile contingit sperare et desperare. Sed cuiuslibet virtutis finis et bonum est huiusmodi bonum, ut patet libro secundo. Et per consequens circa cuiuslibet virtutis finem et bonum contingit sperare et desperare. 25

Uterius dicendum est secundum eundem expositorem, quod magnanimitas est mediate moderatiua passionum omnium circa omnes materias omnium virtutum moralium, scilicet mediantibus aliis virtutibus, quod patet, quia cum ipsa presupponit alias virtutes, ipsa est mediantibus aliis virtutibus operatiua circa omnes earum materias. Et per consequens mediate est moderatiua omnium passionum. [cf. Gerald of Odo, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 26] 30

15 et] *intra lin.*

Ex quibus iam potest haberi, quid sit magnanimitas. Vnde idem expositor dupliciter eam diffinit. Primo sic: *Magnanimitas est rectum ac purum, firmum et efficax, fiduciale desiderium magni boni per magnam hominis sufficientiam possibilis optineri. Est enim desiderium, quia est habitus electiuus, sicut et quelibet alia moralis virtus; est autem*  
 5 *rectum, quia virtuosum; et est purum, quia non est vano appetitui permixtum; et est firmum, quia infragibile per occursum difficultatum; et est efficax, quia est operatiuum ad desideratum bonum; et est fiduciale, quia cum fiducia proprie dignitatis et sufficientie diuinitus accepte, per quam magnanimus se ipsum illo magno dignificat bono. Et exponit secundum mensuram possibilitatis. Alio modo potest dici iuxta litteram Philosophi, quod magnanimitas est*  
 10 *habitus supponens habitum et bonitatem virtutum prebens ornatum et maioritatem virtutibus medians inter caymotem uel caymiam et pusillanimitatem, inter spem caymi et desperationem pusillanimitatis, secundum quem magnanimus dignus existens se ipsum dignificat. Et exponit altis officiis, arduis negociis et quibuslibet bonis et magnis rebus agendis, secundum quem est docilis et innocens ac bene se habens circa bona honorabilia circa fortuita prospera et aduersa,*  
 15 *circa pericula bellicosa, circa liberalia munera, circa urbanitatis signa, circa opera magnifica, circa amabilia et veridica, circa magna noua et mala preterita, circa corporalem gestum et motum, et hec omnia patent ex littera. [cf. Gerald of Odo, In Ethicorum 4 q. 32]*

Et item magnanimitas non est virtus generalis, cum non sit iusticia legalis; nec specialis, quia dicit Philosophus, quod magnanimi videbitur esse quod in qualibet virtute  
 20 est magnum; igitur non est virtus.

Ad hoc argumentum dicendum est, sicut dicit Buridanus, quod magnanimitas est virtus specialis specificè et formaliter distincta contra alias virtutes, quia est circa obiectum speciale et distinctum ab obiectis aliarum virtutum. Sed ipsa potest dici (virtus) communis presuppositiue siue materialiter pro tanto, quia ipsa presupponit omnem aliam virtutem.  
 25 *Magnanimi enim est se dignificare magnis honoribus, quibus nullus est dignus secundum Aristotelem, nisi vere bonus, scilicet virtutibus singulis insignitus. Et ergo ipsius magnanimi presuppositiue est esse magnum secundum omnem virtutem. Magnanimus etiam non appetit maximos honores principaliter, sed appetit magnis honoribus esse dignus, quod fit semper in unoquoque magnum esse; etiam magnanimus non appetit honores propter se, sed*  
 30 *gratia virtutum, videlicet ut ornacius possit in excellentiores operationes virtutum. Et ideo magis appetit virtutes, et propter hoc eius primaria intentio est esse magnum in qualibet virtute. [cf. Buridan, In Ethicorum 4 q. 11 arg. 2]*

Et pro illo, quomodo magnanimitas sit virtus generalis uel specialis est notandum secundum expositorem, quod virtus moralis potest dici generalis tripliciter: Vnmodo secundum predicationem, quia predicaretur | de multis virtutibus. Et hoc  
 35 modo virtus, in communi sumpta, potest dici virtus generalis. Et secundum hunc modum magnanimitas non est virtus generalis, sed est una determinata species contra alias condiuisa secundum Philosophum, hic et in secundo libro. Secundo modo aliqua virtus potest dici generalis per operationem, quia facit omnium virtutum opera, et sic secundum  
 40 aliquos iustitia legalis est virtus generalis, de quo in quinto libro videbitur; et hoc secundo modo ipsa magnanimitas etiam non est virtus generalis. Tertio modo dicitur aliqua virtus generalis per cooperationem, quia scilicet cuilibet alteri virtuti morali operanti cooperatur; et hoc modo prudentia habet generalitatem ad omnes virtutes

41 generalis] et hoc secundo—generalis in marg.

*morales, quia nulla operatur prudentia non cooperante, quia prudentia cuiuslibet virtuti dictat modum operandi, ut habetur sexto huius. Et hoc tertio modo magnanimitas dici potest virtus generalis, quia ceteris virtutibus cooperatur ad optime operari et omnibus utitur ad consecutionem finis optimi, qui potest eas haberi. Est tamen sciendum, quod differenter debent dici virtutes generales magnanimitas et prudentia, quia prudentia necessario cooperatur cuiuslibet virtuti operanti. Nulla enim operatur sine prudentia, sed magnanimitas non necessario cooperatur cuiuslibet virtuti operanti, quia alie possunt et esse et operari sine ipsa quamvis non econverso, tamen magnanimitas operans est cooperans. [cf. Gerald of Odo, In Ethicorum 4 q. 30]*

Vide alia argumenta Byridani in questione.

Andreas de Weitra (?), *Disputata super questionibus Byridani quinque librorum Ethicorum Aristotelis*, MS Vienna, ÖNB 5149, ff. 216<sup>v</sup>–219<sup>v</sup>

### VTRUM MAGNANIMITAS SIT VIRTUS MORALIS?

In conclusione responsali dicitur, quod magnanimitas est virtus moralis.

Contra illam conclusionem arguitur quod sic: *Nulla virtus opponitur alteri virtuti. Sed magnanimitas opponitur humilitati, quod patet, quia magnanimus dignum se reputat magnis et alios contempnit, quarto huius. Sed humilitas habet modum contrarium. Igitur etc. [cf. Thomas Aquinas, Summa theologiae II.II.129.3 arg. 4 following Urban of Melk]*

Respondetur negando minorem. Intelligendum dico, sicut tangit sanctus Thomas, *quod humilitas et magnanimitas non sunt contrarie, quamvis in contraria tendere videantur. Quod autem non sint contrarie, declarat sic, quia in homine inuenitur aliquid magnum quod ex dono dei possidet, et aliquis defectus, qui competit ei ex infirmitate nature. Magnanimitas ergo facit quod homo magis se dignificet secundum considerationem donorum que possidet a deo, sicut si habet magnam virtutem. Tunc magnanimitas facit quod ad perfecta opera virtutis tendat, et similiter dicendum est de usu cuiuslibet alterius boni, puta scientie uel exterioris fortune. Humilitas autem facit quod homo se ipsum parvipendat secundum considerationem proprii defectus. | Similiter magnanimitas contempnit alios secundum quod deficiunt a donis dei, non enim tantum alios appreciatur quod pro eis aliquid indecens faciat. Sed humilitas alios honorat et superiores estimat in quantum in eis inspicit aliquid de donis dei. Vnde de viro iusto dicitur in Psalmo: Ad nichilum deductus est in conspectu eius malignus, quod pertinet ad contemptum magnanimi, timentes autem dominum glorificat quod pertinet ad honorationem humilis. Magnanimus ergo contempnit homines in quantum sunt peccatores et quasi nichil eos reputat. Humilis autem glorificat homines in quantum habent aliquid de donis dei. [cf. Thomas Aquinas, Summa theologiae II.II.129.3 ra 4 following Urban of Melk]*

Ex quibus patet quod magnanimitas non repugnat humilitati, nec sunt contraria quamvis, ut dictum est, in contraria tendere videantur, quia procedunt secundum

19 magnanimitas] et magnanimitas iter. sed del. 35 humilitati] ymo omnis magnanimus est vere humilis quod declarat quidem ex[positor] add. secundum Urbanum sed del.

*diuersas considerationes.* [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 ad 4, partially following Urban of Melk]

Ymo dicendum est quod omnis magnanimus est vere humilis quod declarat Geraldus sic, *quia omnes viri perfecti et sancti participes virtutum Christi fuerunt humiles,*  
 5 *Christo eis dicente: Discite a me, quia mitis sum et humilis corde, Mt 11. Sed omnes viri secundum deum vere magnanimi fuerunt perfecti et sancti participes virtutum Christi. Magnanimitas enim non fit sine virtutibus et est ornatus et augmentum earum, et per consequens, qui habent eam, habent virtutes et ornatum et perfectionem et sanctitatem earum, et secundum hoc participant virtutes Christi, qui visus est plenus gratie et veritatis,*  
 10 *Joh 1, quare omnes viri secundum deum vere magnanimi sunt, vere humiles. Confirmatur hoc per Ysidorum dicentem quod sancti cum multa constantia redarguerunt principum vicia, in quibus consumata erat humilitas, in libro De summo bono, capitulo 20, ubi iungit uel iunctam ostendit humilitatis conseruationem cum magnanimitatis summa operatione. Summa namque magnanimitas erat cum periculo mortis constanter assurgere ad redarguendos*  
 15 *principes. Ex quibus infert ipse corollarium quod modernis temporibus nullus est vere magnanimus, cum principes vere summe sint viciosi et per consequens nimis redarguendi et tamen per nullum redarguantur. Hec ille.* [cf. Gerald of Odo, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 28 following Urban of Melk]

Contra illa iam dicta arguitur sic. *Nullus humilis habet modum leoninum in gestu, cum*  
 20 *leo sit animal superbum et contemptiuum. Sed magnanimus habet modum leoninum in gestu, ut patet ex eius conditionibus. Igitur etc.*

Hoc argumentum et tria sequentia mouet Geraldus. Ad illud respondetur secundum intentionem eius negando maiorem, ymo omnis vere *humilis habet modum leoninum. Leo namque extra pugnam uel venacionem suam, in communi modo se*  
 25 *habendi, habet motum tardum et grauem et vocem grauem et solidam et non mutat gressum suum propter latratum canum uel occursum terribilium bestiarum. Sic etiam humilis grauis est et non leuis in motu, grauis et non leuis in voce. Hec enim sunt signa mentis bene compositae, et non mutatur ad latratum hominum latrancium uel etiam cominantium, quia humiles sunt, non timidi. Parum enim timent perdere quod contempnunt, quia contempnunt*  
 30 *omnia super quibus potest fieri conminatio, ideo conminationem parum timent. Sic etiam veri magnanimi habent animum ad sola magna bona anime, que non possunt inuili perdere.*

Ad idem secundo arguitur. *Humilis sibi vilescit, sed magnanimus non.* Igitur videtur quod non stent simul, magnanimitas et humilitas. De hoc argumento patet (?) solutio primi argumenti.

35 Tamen secundum intentionem Geraldus respondetur negando minorem. Humilis enim, ut dicit, quantum ad aliqua sibi vilescit, et magnanimus quantum ad consimilia etiam sibi vilescit. Pro quo notandum, quod *humilis secundum duplicem comparationem sibi vilescit et secundum aliam duplicem comparationem sibi non vilescit. Humilis enim comparans se ipsum, ut eum qui bene passus ad*  
 40 *deum, qui benefecit ei et multa bona contulit ei, vilescit in conspectu dei. | Et hoc modo etiam sibi vilescit omnis magnanimus qui beneficiatus existens verecundatur, propter hoc quod beneficiari est superexcessi et beneficiare superexcedentis. Item humilis comparans illud* f. 217<sup>v</sup>

6 viri] in marg. 19 Contra] Ad Ex Sed precedit sed del. 36 enim] q add. sed del. 38–39 comparationem] considerationem



*quod nunc valet ad illud quod in futurum valere potest, vilescit sibi. Et hic est modus magnanimi, cum (!) nichil magni (!) est in comparatione ad illud quod esse potest. Istud ergo (sibi) vilescere multum excitat hominem humilem ad bene agere. Iterum humilis comparat illud quod est et quod habet ad illud quod fuit et quod habuit ante notitiam sui. Et hoc modo non vilescit sibi, ymo se multum dignificans gratias agit deo, a quo accepit id quod est et quod 5 boni habet. Iterum humilis comparat quantum nunc cum virtute et humilitate valet ad illud quod deserta virtute sine humilitate valeret et in hoc non sibi vilescit, sicut nec magnanimus, ymo in hac comparatione multum se dignificat, sicut magnanimus.*

Ex alio arguitur tertio contra dicta: Humili vix videtur quod *primum gradum perfectionis* sit adeptus. Sed sic de se opinari pertinet ad pusillanimum et non 10 ad magnanimum; igitur etc. Maior patet auctoritate Bernardi dicentis, quod humilis quanto plus proficit, eo minus se reputat profecisse. Nam si usque ad summum gradum boni exercitii profecerit, aliquid de primi gradus imperfectione relinquitur, ut vix summum *primum gradum* videatur adeptus.

Respondetur negando minorem. Vnde licet humili vix videatur, quod pri- 15 mum gradum perfectionis attigerit, tamen videtur sibi, quod eum attigerit, sicut bene sequitur, ille vix cecidit, ergo cecidit. Quod autem hoc modo videtur humili, scilicet quod vix attigerit primum gradum perfectionis, hoc *provenit ex hoc*, quia humilis comparat illud, quod fecit et quod est ad illud quod facere et esse potest. Et hoc modo vix videtur ei aliquid boni fecisse uel esse, propter hoc, quia in infinitum potest gratia dei 20 eum et valorem suum et bonum eius augere.

Ex alio arguitur quarto sic. *Humilitas est contemptus proprie excellentie*, sed magnanimus vult superexcellere, ut dicit Aristoteles; et igitur repugnant magnanimitas et humilitas.

Respondetur negando consequentiam. Nam *humilitas est contemptus proprie 25 excellentie contrarius appetitui superbie, non autem contrarius appetitui magnanimitatis, ymo in eo inclusus, quia*, ut visis est, magnanimus omnino contempnit excellentiam in honoribus, id est in illis signis et reuerenciis fallacibus. Non enim vult primos accubitus in cenis, nec primas cathedras in synagogis, nec primas salutationes in foro, nec vocari ab omnibus rabbi, sicut faciunt ypocrite, superbi, caymi, ventosi et fumosi. [cf. Gerald of 30 Odo, In *Ethicorum* 4 q. 28 according to Urban of Melk]

Sed est dubium circa dicta, utrum idem habitus sit magnanimitas et humilitas. Dicunt aliqui quod sit recte, sicut dicitur de liberalitate et magnifiscentia uel de temperantia et virginitate. Vnde dicunt quod idem habitus est magnanimitas 35 inquantum inclinatur ad appetendum atque prosequendum honores magnos uel maximos, quos oportet et ubi et quando et sic de aliis. Et hoc iuxta limitationem superius positam loquendo de honoribus materialiter sumptis. Et humilitas inquantum inclinatur ad contempnendum honores, quos oportet contempnere, ubi et quando et sic de aliis, ita quod humilitas esset modus quidem magnanimitatis, sicut virginitas est modus temperantie, et quod non 40 different specificè sed solum differentia modalis.

11 Bernardi] bn' (?) b' add. sed del. 15 Respondetur] dicit respondetur 19 quod<sup>3</sup>] illud quod add. in marg. 27 ymo] imo add. sed del. ymo add. | inclusus] omnino (?) add. sed del. 28 fallacibus] bibus sive cibus add. (iter?) 32 humilitas] hui<sup>5</sup> add. sed del. humilitas

Alii vero dicunt quod humilitas sit pars magnanimitatis et quod magnanimitas sit multi habitus partiales, quibus homo bene se habet circa honores et inhonorationes, eo modo quo dictum est, et sic secundum istos diceretur de magnanimitate et humilitate, sicut dictum est secundum unam opinionem de  
5 temperantia et virginitate, que ponit ibi diuersos habitus. Primum tamen plus placet. [cf. Sebold Messner, p. 324, ll. 9–21].

Tamen vis tenere secundum, poteris te fundari ex dictis Geraldii, quasi septima superius posita de magnificencia et liberalitate, qui videtur ponere quod sint habitus distincti; uel ex dictis Byridani qui idem de hac inclinatur  
10 opinione. |

f. 218<sup>r</sup>

Ex alio arguitur ad idem. *Cuiuslibet virtutis proprietates sunt laudabiles, sed magnanimus habet quasdam proprietates vituperabiles.* Igitur etc. Maior nota, sed minor probatur. *Primo quidem, quia non est memor beneficiorum; secundo, quia est ociosus et tardus; tertio, quia utitur yronia ad multos; quarto, quia non potest aliis conuiuere; quinto, quia  
15 magis possidet infructuosa quam fructuosa.* Igitur etc. [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 arg. 5]

Ad argumentum respondetur negando minorem. Ad eius probationem dicitur secundum intentionem sancti Thome, quod *ille proprietates secundum quod ad magnanimitatem pertinent non sunt vituperabiles, sed superexcedenter laudabiles.* Vnde  
20 *quod primo dicitur quod magnanimus non habet memoriam eorum, a quibus beneficia recepit, intelligendum est quantum ad hoc, quod non est sibi delectabile, quia ab aliquibus beneficia recipiat, quin sibi maiora recompenset, quod pertinet ad perfectionem gratitudinis, in cuius actu vult superexcellere, sicut et in actibus aliarum virtutum.* [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 ra. 5, maybe following Urban of Melk]

Sed quod *secundo dicitur, quod est ociosus et tardus, non est intelligendum, quod deficiat ab operando ea que sibi conueniunt, sed quia non ingerit se quibuscumque operibus, sed solum magnis, qualia decent eum.* [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 ra. 5 and Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 5d]

Quod autem *tertio dicitur quod utitur yronia non secundum quod opponitur veritati, ut scilicet dicat de se aliqua vilia, que non sunt, uel neget aliqua magna, que sunt, sed quia non  
30 totam suam magnanimitatem monstrat, maxime quantum ad inferiorem multitudinem, quia dicit Philosophus, quod ad magnanimum pertinet esse magnum ad eos qui in dignitatibus et in bonis fortunis sunt ad medios autem moderatum.* [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 ra. 5, maybe following Urban of Melk]

Quod etiam *quarto dicitur, quod ad alios non potest conuiuere.* Intelligendum est, quod non potest ad alios conuiuere, *scilicet familiariter, nisi ad amicos, quia omnino vitat adulationem et simulationem, que pertinent ad animi paruitatem. Conuiuuit tamen omnibus et magnis et paruis secundum quod oportet, etc.* [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 ra. 5]

De *quinto autem quod magis vult habere infructuosa non quecumque, sed bona, id est honesta, nam in omnibus preponit honesta utilibus, tanquam maiora. Vtilia enim  
40 queruntur ad subueniendum alicui defectui, qui magnanimitati repugnant.* Et ex hoc talia utilia dicuntur fructuosa, honesta autem isto respectu infructuosa, quarum

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8–10 qui videtur ... opinione add. in marg. inf.

tamen proprie sint magis fructuosa quam utilia. Et inde sententiam et in certis  
 〈modis〉 clariorem (!) ponit Buridanus exponendo illas et alias proprietates  
 magnanimi, quas vide in questione presenti. [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa  
 theologiae* II.II.129.3 ra. 5]

Ex alio arguitur ad idem. *Virtus moralis est quedam qualitas mentis, sed magna- 5*  
*nimitas habet quasdam conditiones siue proprietates corporales; igitur non est vir-*  
*tus moralis. Minor patet auctoritate Philosophi dicens quod motus lentus magna-*  
*nimi videtur et vox grauis et locutio stabilis. [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae**  
*II.II.129.3 arg. 3, following Urban of Melk]*

Ad hoc argumentum est dicendum negando consequentiam et ulterius 10  
 dicitur, ut tangit Byridanus *quod potentie anime superiores, cum fuerint perfecte per*  
*virtutes sibi debitas, habent regulare potentias inferiores, et ergo non est inconueniens virtuti*  
*attribuere proprietates seu operationes aliquas corporales, non tamen sicut elicitas, sed sicut*  
*regulatas et imparatas ab illa virtute siue ab illa potentia, in qua illa virtus existat. [cf.*  
*Buridan, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 11 ra. 3, following Urban of Melk]* 15

Et hec solutio est de intentione sancti Thome, qui dicit ad hoc argumen-  
 tum, quod *corporales motus diuersificantur secundum diuersas anime apprehensiones et*  
*affectiones. Et secundum hoc contingit quod ad magnanimitatem secuntur quedam determi-*  
*nata accidentia circa motus corporales. Velocitas enim motus prouenit ex eo quod homo ad*  
*multa intendit, que ex prole festinat. Sed magnanimus intendit solum ad magna que pauca 20*  
*sunt, que indigent etiam magna intentione, et ideo habet motum tardum. Similiter etiam*  
 f. 128<sup>v</sup> *acuitas vocis et velocitas precipue competit huius, qui de quibusdam intendere | volunt quod*  
*non pertinet ad magnanimos, qui non intromittunt se nisi de magnis. Et sicut predictae dispo-*  
*sitiones corporalium motuum conueniunt magnanimis secundum modum affectionis eorum. Ita*  
*etiam in istis, qui sunt naturaliter dispositi ad magnanimitatem, tales conditiones naturaliter 25*  
*inueniuntur. [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 ra. 3, following*  
 Urban of Melk]

Ex alio arguitur sic: Quelibet virtus moralis est moderatiua aliquarum pas-  
 sionum, secundo huius. Sed *magnanimus non moderatur aliquas passiones. Igitur*  
*non est virtus moralis. Tenet consequentia et maior, sed minor probatur. Primo, 30*  
*quia non moderatur passiones appetitus sensitiui, quia circa honores nulla fit passio*  
*in appetitu sensitiuo dicente Aristotele, quod amatiuus honoris gaudet honore, nichil*  
*patiente corpore, sed magis mente, capitulo de temperantia in principio; nec etiam mode-*  
*ratur passiones appetitus intellectiui. Tales enim non egent moderamine, cum non*  
*aduersentur rationi, sicut passiones appetitus sensitiui. 35*

*Secundo, quia Philosophus tractans de fortitudine et temperantia et aliis virtutibus*  
 semper ponit *passiones regulatas per virtutes. Sed agens de magnanimitate non egit de*  
*passionibus regulatis per eam, quare nulle videntur esse.*

*Tertio. Magnanimitas videtur esse operatiua circa omnes materias virtutum mora-*  
 lium, quia est *ornatus omnium aliarum virtutum. Sed nulle speciales passiones sunt 40*  
*circa materias omnium virtutum moralium. Igitur etc. [cf. Gerald of Odo, *In**  
*Ethicorum* 4 q. 26, following Urban of Melk]

Geraldus mouet illam questionem, utrum magnanimitas moderetur aliquas passiones et respondetur, quod sic et secundum hoc negetur minor. [Vnde dicit consequenter] Pro quo notandum secundum eundem, *quod magnanimitas sicut dupliciter operatur* [uerum tamquam virtus specialis autem tamquam virtus generalis], ita *dupliciter moderatur passiones occurrentes. Operatur enim, ut magnanimitas magnanimiter, et sic specialiter secundum quod operatio est ei propria et specialis. Operatur etiam ut fortitudo fortiter et ut magnificencia magnificenter, et sic uniuersaliter et communiter, ut quelibet alia virtus pro eo, quod ut sic est ornatus et augmentum omnium virtutum. Et secundum hoc patet, quod moderatur passiones dupliciter, unomodo ut magnanimitas magnanimiter operans. Et sic moderatur spem et desperationem; aliomodo, ut magnitudo cuiuslibet alterius virtutis, et sic moderatur quaslibet alias passiones, quas virtutes singule moderantur.*

Primum verum, quod magnanimitas operans magnanimiter moderetur spem et desperationem, probat sic, *quia omnis virtus immediate moderatur illas passiones, per quas immediate itur in vicia opposita illi, ut patet in singulis. Sed per spem excessiuam immediate itur in caymotem et per desperationem immediate in pussillamitatem. Excessus namque spei facit hominem conari ad illud, quod supra vires, supra facultatem, supra dignitatem et sufficientiam eius. Hoc autem est conari caymotice. Desperatio autem excessiuam facit hominem [excedere] discedere ab operationibus bonis quibus et quarum finibus esset dignus et sufficiens. Hec autem vicia sunt immediate opposita magnanimitati, quare ipsa immediate moderatur spem et desperationem.*

Secundum autem, scilicet quod magnanimitas ut magnitudo alterius virtutis moderetur quaslibet alias passiones, quas virtutes singule moderantur probat sic, *quia omnis virtus sicut operatiua est circa aliquam materiam, sic est moderatiua passionum incidentium circa illam. Aliter enim virtus non operaretur, ut oportet pro eo quod passiones non moderate deprauarent operationem. Sed magnanimitas est operatiua circa omnem materiam mediantibus aliis virtutibus, quare circa omnem materiam mediate moderatur omnes operationes occurrentes circa illam. Ex quibus patet quod magnanimitas habet moderare passiones, et quas et qualiter per hoc.*

Tunc patet ulterius dici ad improbationem minoris et primo ad illam secundum intentionem dicti doctoris | et ipsius iam dicta, *quod magnanimitas immediate moderatur spem et desperationem siue sint in appetitu sensitio siue intellectiuo, quia utrobique possunt esse et utrobique possunt esse et bone et male. Cum igitur dicitur ulterius, quod passiones appetitus intellectiui etiam non aduersantur rationi, dico quod ymo, quia sicut opiniones intellectus sepe contradicunt veritati. Sic etiam passiones voluntatis sepe aduersantur bonitati et rationi. Et cum etiam ulterius dicebatur, quod circa honorem non fit passio in appetitu sensitio secundum Philosophum, dico verum est quod non circa honorem quouis modo sumptum causatur passio in appetitu sensitio, quia circa talem honorem, qui sequitur disciplinam, non causatur passio in appetitu sensitio, de quo loquitur Philosophus. Sed si sumitur honor pro hac re honorabili, que est victoria uel triumphus, bene fit passio ex tali honore in appetitu sensitio, ymo etiam in animali ipsius animalis bruti. [cf. Gerald of Odo, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 26]*

22 magnitudo] corr.; co<sub>3</sub> add. sed del. 28 patet] in marg. 36 ulterius] in marg. 40 hac] in marg.

Ad secundam inprobatur minorem. Respondetur negando ad minorem. Vnde *Philosophus distinguens magnanimitatem ab extremis viciis suis satis innuit illas passiones, quamvis non expresserit eas.* [cf. *ibid.*, maybe following Urban of Melk]

*Ad tertiam* respondetur negando minorem. Vnde dico, *quod circa omnem materiam virtutis generaliter occurrunt hec passiones due, scilicet spes et desperatio, quod patet, quia circa omne bonum magnum et arduum, difficile et honorabile, et cum difficultate aquisibile contingit sperare et desperare. Sed finis et bonum cuiuslibet virtutis est huiusmodi bonum, ut patet libro secundo. Et per consequens circa cuiuslibet virtutis finem et bonum contingit sperare et desperare.* [cf. *ibid.*]

Ex quo patet, ut etiam dictum est, quomodo *magnanimitas* operans magnanimitate immediate moderatur spem et desperationem, operans autem ut magnitudo aliarum cuiuslibet alterius virtutis est mediate moderatiua omnium passionum circa omnes materias omnium virtutum moralium, scilicet *mediantibus aliis virtutibus*, nam ex quo ipsa alias virtutes presupponit, ipsa etiam *mediantibus aliis virtutibus operatiua* et circa omnes earum materias et sic *mediate moderatiua* omnium passionum talium, ut dictum est in solutione tertie improbationis. [cf. *ibid.*, following Urban of Melk]

Sed diceres ex dictis videtur sequi, quod magnanimitas esset virtus generalis. Consequentia videtur falsa, cum sit specialis et circa speciale obiectum et speciales passiones etiam cum non sit *iustitia legalis*. Et patet tamen consequentia, quia, ut dictum est, ipsa est circa materias omnium virtutum moderatiua passionum. Et confirmatur, quia dicit Aristoteles, quod magnanimi videbitur esse quod in qualibet virtute est magnum. Igitur etc.

Pro isto argumento notandum est quomodo magnanimitas sit virtus generalis. Vnde *secundum Geroldum: virtus moralis potest dici generalis tripliciter: Vnmodo secundum predicationem, quia predicaretur de multis virtutibus. Et hoc modo virtus, in communi sumpta, potest dici virtus generalis.* Et secundum hunc modum *magnanimitas non est virtus generalis, sed est una determinata species contra alias condiuisa secundum Philosophum, hic et in secundo libro; et per consequens specialis.* Secundo modo aliqua virtus potest dici generalis *per operationem, quia facit omnium virtutum opera, et sic secundum aliquos iustitia legalis est virtus generalis, de quo in quinto libro videbitur, faciens omnia omnium virtutum opera, que est observata legis, que per omnem virtutem viuere precipit, et secundum omnem vicium prohibet, de quo in quinto videbitur. <<<Sic iterum magnanimitas non est virtus generalis, quia virtus primo modo generalis operatur sine aliis virtutibus, puta si quis det, ubi oportet, propter obedientiam legis hoc precipientis non propter inclinationem liberalitatis. Et sic de aliis, ut dicit hic Philosophus; ergo non est generalis.>>>* Tertio modo dicitur aliqua virtus generalis *per cooperationem, quia scilicet cuiuslibet alteri virtuti morali operanti cooperatur; et hoc modo prudentia habet generalitatem ad omnes virtutes morales, quia nulla operatur prudentia non cooperante, quia prudentia cuiuslibet virtuti dictat modum operandi, ut habetur sexto huius. Et hoc tertio modo magnanimitas dici potest virtus generalis, quia ceteris virtutibus cooperatur ad optime operari et omnibus utitur ad consecu-*

24–25 generalis] uel specialis add. sed del. 32 est] supra lin. 34–37 Sic ... generalis add. in marg. inf. cum signo

tionem finis optimi, qui potest eas haberi. Est tamen sciendum, quod differenter debent dici generales virtutes, magnanimitas et prudentia, quia prudentia necessario cooperatur cuilibet virtuti morali operanti. Nulla enim operatur sine prudentia, sed magnanimitas non necessario cooperatur cuilibet virtuti operanti, quia alie possunt et esse et operari sine ipsa, quamvis non econuerso, tamen magnanimitas | operans necessario est cooperans, ut patet ex dictis. [cf. f. 219<sup>v</sup> Gerald of Odo, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 30, following Urban of Melk and including a quotation directly (?) from Gerald in the lower margin]

Eandem sententiam quasi tangit Buridanus in solutione secunde rationis ante omnium, ubi etiam declarat, quomodo magnanimitas sit virtus specialis et quomodo generalis.

Ex quibus iam simul recollectis potest haberi, quid sit magnanimitas. Vnde Geraldus *dupliciter* eam diffinit. Primo sic: *Magnanimitas est rectum ac purum, firmum et efficax, fiduciale desiderium magni boni per magnam hominis sufficientiam possibilis optineri. Est enim desiderium, quia est habitus electiuus, sicut et quelibet alia moralis virtus; est autem rectum, quia virtuosum; et est purum, quia non est vano appetitui permixtum; et est firmum, quia est infragibile per occursum difficultatum; et est efficax, quia est operatium ad desideratum bonum; et est fiduciale, quia cum fiducia proprie dignitatis et sufficientie diuinitus accepte, per quam magnanimus se ipsum illo magno bono dignificat. Et exponit secundum mensuram possibilitatis. Alio autem modo potest sic dici iuxta litteram Philosophi quod magnanimitas est habitus supponens habitum et bonitatem virtutum prebens ornatum et maioritatem virtutibus medians inter caymotem uel caymiam et pusillanimitatem, inter spem caymi et desperationem pusillanimis, secundum quem magnanimus dignus existens se ipsum dignificat. Et exponit altis officiis, arduis negociis et quibuslibet bonis et magnis rebus agendis, secundum quem est docilis et innocens ac bene se habens circa bona honorabilia, circa fortuita prospera et aduersa, circa pericula bellicosa, circa liberalia munera, circa urbanitatis signa, circa opera magnifica, circa amabilia et veridica, circa magna noua et mala preterita, circa corporalem gestum et motum, et ista omnia trahi possunt ex littera. Tantum de illa questione. [cf. Gerald of Odo, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 32]*

Andreas Wall de Walczhaim, *Questiones quinque librorum Ethicorum Aristotelis*, MS Munich, BSB clm 18883, ff. 177<sup>r</sup>–178<sup>r</sup>

#### VTRUM MAGNANIMITAS SIT VIRTUS MORALIS?

Notandum. Magnanimitas est habitus inclinans bene se habendum circa honores magnos mediocies (!) dum oportet et ubi et sic de aliis circumstantiis. [cf. Conrad Koler, *Quaestiones super libris Ethicorum* 4 q. 11]

Conclusio responsalis: Magnanimitas est virtus moralis.

Arguitur, virtus moralis est quedam qualitas mentis, sed magnanimitas est dispositio corporalis. Probat per Aristotelem, qui dicit quod motus lentus et vox grauis sunt magnanimi. [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 arg. 3]

18 bono]inter lin. 21 caymiam] caymam sed corr. inter lin.

Ad idem. *Nulla virtus moralis opponitur alteri, sed magnanimitas opponitur humilitati, quia magnanimus magnis se reputat dignum.* [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 arg. 4]

Ad idem. *Nullus humilis habet modum leoninum in gestu, sed sic est de magnanimo. Igitur humilis non est magnanimus.* 5

Ad idem. *Humilis sibi vilescit et non magnanimus.*

Ad idem. *Humili videtur quod vix primum gradum dignitatis sit adeptus et hoc pertinet ad pusillanimitatem. Aliter probatur per Bernhardum, quanto humilis plus proficit, tanto se minus profecisse putatur.*

Ad idem. *Humilis est contemptus proprie excellentie, sed magnanimus vult superexcellere. Igitur differunt.* 10

Ad primum negatur minor. Ad probationem dicitur concedendo hoc quod magnanimus habet considerandum proprietates corporales, sed magnanimus non est ille proprietates, nam *potentie anime superiores, cum fuerint perfecte per virtutes sibi debitas, habent regulare potentias inferiores, et igitur non est inconueniens virtuti attribuire virtutes corporales, non tamquam elicitas, sed sicut regulatas.* 15

Ad aliud negatur minor et Byridanus dicitur secundum sanctum Thomam, quod *humilitas et magnanimitas non sunt contrarie, quamuis in contrarium tendere videantur.* Argumentum probatur, quia *in homine inuenitur aliquid magnum, quod ex dono dei possidet, et etiam aliquis defectus, qui competit ei ex natura. Magnanimitas facit, | quod homo dignificet se magnis, que possidet a deo, sicut si est magna virtus. Tunc magnanimitas tendat ad maiorem perfectionem virtutis, et sic dicitur de aliis. Humilitas autem quod homo se ipsum pariipendat secundum proprium defectum considerando se. Similiter magnanimitas contempnit alios secundum quod deficiunt a donis dei. Sed humilitas alios honorat et meliores estimat, in quantum in eis inspicit [in eis] aut de donis dei. Vnde de viro iusto dicitur in Psalmo: Ad nichilum deductus est in conspectu dei. Et sic omnis magnanimus est vere humilis, quod quidam declarat sic: Omnes viri perfecti et sancti participes virtutum Christi sunt humiles, Christo eis dicente: Discite a me, quia mitis sum et humilis corde. Sed omnes viri secundum deum vere magnanimi fuerunt et sancti et participes virtutum Christi. Magnanimitas non fit sine virtutibus et est ornatus et augmentum virtutum, et secundum hoc participa(n)t virtute Christi.* 20

Ad aliud secundum intentionem expositoris negando maiorem, ymo omnis vere humilis habet modum leoninum. *Leo enim extra venationem suam, in communi modo habendi se, habet motum grauem et vocem grauem et non mutat gressum propter occursum terribilium bestiarum. Sic etiam humilis grauis et non leuis in motu, grauis et non leuis in voce, quia hec sunt signa mentis bene compositae, et non mutatur ad latratum hominum comminantium, quia humiles sunt, non timidi. Sic etiam veri magnanimi habent animum ad soli vere animi virtutem.* 35

Ad aliud negatur minor, ymo magnanimus quantum ad consimilia in quibus humilis vilescit sibi. Vnde *humilis secundum duplicem considerationem vilescit sibi. Vnde humilis comparans se ipsum, ut eum, qui bene passus est ad deum, qui benefecit ei. Et hoc modo vilescit sibi magnanimus in quantum beneficiatus est, verecundatur. Sed humilis ad hoc quod in futurum valere potest, vilescit sibi. Et hic* 40

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2 magnis] magis    18 contrarie] contraria    32 negando] minorem add. sed del.

*modus etiam est magnanimi. Sed humilis comparando illud quod est et quod habet ad illud quod fuit et quod habuit ante notitiam sui. Tunc non vilescit sibi, immo se ipsum multum dignificans gratias agens deo et etiam, quando homines comparat ut cum virtute valeret, tunc dignificat se.*

- 5 Ad aliud negatur minor, scilicet quod sic opinari pertinet ad pusillanimitatem. Vnde licet humili videtur, quod vix unum gradum humilitatis (!) attigerit, tamen videtur, quod attigerit, sicut bene sequitur, | ille vix cecidit, igitur cecidit. f. 178<sup>r</sup>

Ad ultimum negatur consequentia. Vnde *humilitas est contemptus proprie excellentie contrarius appetitui superbi, quia magnanimus omnino contempnit reuerentiam in honoribus fallacibus. Non enim vult vocari ab hominibus rabbi, sicut faciunt ypocrite.*

Arguitur. Quelibet virtus est moderatiua passionum aliquarum. Sed sic non est de magnanimitate. Argumentum probatur, *quia non moderatur passiones appetitus sensitui, quia circa appetitum sensituum non moderatur. Tales passiones nec potest moderare intellectum, quia tales non indigent moderamine, quia non aduersatur sensui.*

Ad primum negatur minor et dicitur, quod *magnanimitas immediate moderatur spem et delectationem (!), quia virtus immedate moderatur passiones, per quas itur ad vitia sibi opposita. Sed excessiue per spem itur ad caymotem. Igitur desperatio autem excessiua facit hominem discedere a virtute. Et hec vitia sunt immediate opposita magnanimitati, et sic moderatur passiones appetitus sensitui et intellectus, et passiones appetitus intellectui etiam aduersantur voluntati et igitur indigent moderamine.*

Item *Philosophus distinguens magnanimitatem a vitis extremis, expressit vitia magnanimitati opposita.*

- 25 Item. Circa omnem virtutem occurrunt spes et desperatio, quia *circa magnum arduum cum difficultate aquisibile contingit sperare et desperare.*

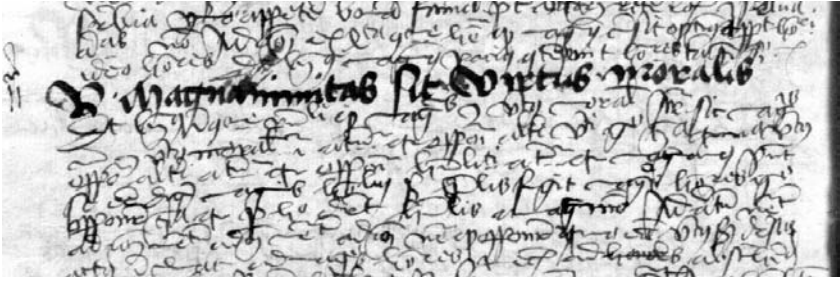
Consequenter dicitur, quod *magnanimitas est mediate moderatiua omnium passionum circa omnes materias aliarum virtutum, quia ipsa presumpsit alias virtutes. [cf. Gerald of Odo, In Ethicorum 4 q. 26 according to Urban of Melk]*

- 30 Ad illud: Magnanimitas nec est virtus generalis nec specialis.

Sciendum, *quod magnanimitas est virtus specialis specificè et formaliter distincta contra alias, quia est circa obiecta distincta ab aliis. Potest tamen dici virtus communis presuppositiue siue materialiter, quia supponit omnem aliam virtutem, quia magnanimi est se dignificare magnis honoribus, quibus nullus est dignus secundum Aristotelem, nisi omnibus virtutibus insignitus. Et magnanimus non appetit honores principaliter, sed appetit eis esse dignus. Et sic etiam non appetit propter se, sed gratia virtutum, ut possit in excellentiores operationes propter virtutes. [cf. Buridan, In Ethicorum 4 q. 11 ad 2]*

Et sic magnanimitas est virtus moralis inclinans hominem, etc. Et vitia sibi opposita sunt caymotes et pusillanimitas.





Stephanus de Brugen, *Quaestiones circa quinque libros Ethicorum*, MS Melk, Stiftsbibliothek, 801 (823), ff. 143<sup>v</sup>–144<sup>v</sup>

### VTRUM MAGNANIMITAS SIT VIRTUS MORALIS?

Dicit Buridanus in questione responsali quod magnanimitas est virtus moralis.

Arguitur sic. Magnanimitas non est virtus moralis. Igitur argumentum probatur, quia opponitur alteri virtuti. Ergo tenet consequentia, quia nulla virtus opponitur alteri. Argumentum probatur, quia opponitur humilitati. Argumentum probatur, quia magnanimus putat se esse dignus magnis honoribus, sed humilis fugit magnos honores; ergo opponitur. Tenet consequentia, quia per hoc differt humilis et magnanimus.

Ad argumentum negatur argumentum. Ad probationem negatur argumentum. Ad probationem negatur argumentum. Ad probationem negatur quod opponitur, ymo omnis virtus secundum (...) inclinat ad magnos honores et etiam ad abstrahendum se ab honoribus sibi non debitis, et hoc primum fit per rationem magnanimitatis, secundum per humilitatem. Humilis enim abstrahit se a magnis honoribus sibi non debitis, sed non abstrahit se ab honoribus sibi debitis, ubi et quando oportet. Dicit Sanctus Thomas, *quod humilitas et magnanimitas non sunt contrarie, quamvis videantur tendere in contraria*. Arguitur quod sic, quia *in homine inuenitur aliquid magnum quod ex dono dei possidet*, etiam ibidem inuenitur *defectus competens ei ex infirmitate nature*. Modo *magnanimitas facit quod homo magnanimus dignificet se magnis secundum considerationem donorum que possidet a deo*, ut | [ut] *si habet magnam virtutem (...)*. Tunc *magnanimitas facit, ut homo tendat ad perfecta opera virtutis, humilitas autem facit, quod homo se ipsum parvipendat secundum considerationem proprii defectus*. Dicit consequenter, quod *magnanimus contempnit homines in quantum sunt peccatores et quasi eos nichil reputat. Humilis autem glorificat homines in quantum habent aliquid de donis dei*. Et sic patet, quod *magnanimus non repugnat humilitati, ymo omnis magnanimus est vere humilis*; igitur etc. [cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II.II.129.3 ra. 4 according to Urban of Melk]

Arguitur, *quelibet virtus est moderatiua passionum aliquarum, ut patet secundo huius. Sed magnanimitas non moderatur aliquas passiones*. Probatur, quia *nec moderatur appetitus*

12 ad] honores add. sed del.

*sensitiui passiones, nec appetitus intellectiui. Non primi, quia circa honorem nulla est passio in appetitu sensitiuo, ut sic probatur per Aristotelem in tertio capitulo de temperantia, amatiuus honoris gaudet honore, nihil patiente corpore, sed potius mente. Nec secundum, quia tales non egent moderamine. Argumentum (probatur), quia (non) aduersantur rationi, sicut passiones appetitus sensitiui, quia non videtur per quem modum et que essent tales passiones.*

Ad argumentum conceditur et negatur minor. Vnde sicut tangit quidam expositor, quod *magnanimitas immediate moderatur spem et desperationem. Probatur, quia omnis virtus immediate moderatur passiones, per quas immediate itur ad vicia sibi opposita, ut patet inductiue. Modo per spem excessiuam tunc statim itur in caymotem et per desperationem immediate itur in pussillanimitatem. Excessus enim spei facit hominem conari ad id quod est supra vires suas, supra facultatem, dignitatem et supra sufficientiam eius. Modo hoc est conari caymotice. Et sic dicitur utrumque ut quasi has immoderate et excessiue appetit. Desperatio vero excessiua facit hominem discedere a bonis operibus, quibus et quarum finibus ipse esset dignus et sufficiens. Hec autem vicia sunt immediate opposita magnanimitati, scilicet caymotes et pussillanimitas, quare magnanimitas immediate moderatur spem et desperationem. Sed ad probationem nullum illorum 'dicitur utrumque', ut prius. Ad probationem non in intellectu, quia non aduersantur. Dicit ille, quod passiones appetitus intellectiui etiam aduersantur rationi, sicut enim opiniones intellectus sepe contradicunt veritati. Sicut passiones voluntatis sepe aduersantur voluntati et rationi. Ad probationem 'nec sensitiuo' negatur argumentum. Vnde etiam circa honorem sunt passiones in appetitu sensitiuo, scilicet circa honorem, qui est res honorabilis; ideo magnanimitas moderatur ex hoc. Honor est res honorabilis, ut victoria uel triumphus. Vnde ex victoria bene causatur passio in appetitu sensitiuo, quia circa talem honorem, qui sequitur disciplinam, non causatur passio in appetitu sensitiuo. Et hoc vult Aristoteles in auctoritate allegata, quia circa talem honorem, qui sequitur disciplinam, non causatur passio in appetitu sensitiuo. Et hoc vult Aristoteles secundo huius, ubi loquitur de honoribus, qui secuntur disciplinam. Et illo modo scientia causatur in appetitu intellectu, sed passiones anime bene causantur in appetitu sensitiuo, ut patet hic (?). Uterius dicit, quod circa omnem materiam virtutis occurrit generaliter ille due passiones, scilicet spes et desperatio, quia circa omnem magnum bonum et arduum, difficile et honorabile, et cum difficultate aquisibile contingit sperare et desperari, sed cuiuslibet finis et bonum est tale bonum, ut probatur secundo huius. Ergo circa finem cuiuslibet virtutis et bonum contingit sperare et etiam desperare. Et ideo circa finem cuiuslibet etiam dicit consequenter, quod magnanimitas est mediate moderatiua omnium passionum circa omnem materiam omnium virtutum moralium, et ideo median- tibus aliis virtutibus, patet, quia cum ipsa presupponit alias virtutes, tunc ipsa median- tibus aliis virtutibus est moderatiua passionum circa omnes materias virtutum moralium. Ergo est moderatiua omnium passionum mediate uel immediate. [cf. Gerald of Odo, *In Ethicorum* 4 q. 26 according to Urban of Melk]*

Arguitur contra illa. Circa honorem non contingit excedere. Ergo magnanimitas non est virtus moralis. Tenet consequentia, quia ubi non | contingit f. 144<sup>v</sup> excedere, nulla erit virtus, quia propter hoc ponuntur virtutes, ne excedimus, sed argumentum probatur, quia aliquis honor est bonus, et maior est melior, ergo maximus honor est optimus. Tenet consequentia, quia sicut simpliciter ad

simpliciter, ita magis ad magis, et maximum ad maximum, Topica [*Topica* 5.4, 132b30–31]. Ergo non contingit ibi excedere. Tenet consequentia, quia ubi est maximus, ibi non est excessus.

Confirmatur. Magnanimitas non differt a iustitia. Ergo non erit virtus specialis. Argumentum probatur, quia caymotes non differt ab iniustitia et non opponitur magnanimitati, secundum argumentum: omnis receptio alieni pertinet ad iniustitiam, sed caymotes inclinatur ad recipiendum honorem sibi non debitum. Ergo erit iniustitia. Tenet consequentia ex maiore. [cf. Jodok of Heilbronn, *Exercitia super libros Ethicorum* 4 q. 11]

Ad argumentum negatur argumentum. Ad probationem dicitur quod sic intelligitur illa Topica. Si est debite circumstantiatus, talis honor tunc est virtus, sicut etiam aliquis honor est melior, si est debite circumstantiatus. Et sic conceditur quod ille honor est optimus, qui est optime circumstantiatus, quia stat (?) maximum honorem ubi debite circumstantiatus omne, quia honor secundum summam perfectionem constitutus, quando est bonus, quando est malus, quia sibi debitas circumstantiatus (...) est bonus et alias non.

Ad idem negatur argumentum. Ad probationem negatur argumentum, quia sunt duo vitia differente specie. Ad probationem negatur maior. Sed intelligendum, omnis receptio alieni cum nocimento alterius hoc pertinet ad iniustitiam. Modo caymus et pusillanimus non sunt malefactores, quia non nocerent aliis, quia non iniustificunt alios. Est etiam verum quod ad eundem actum possunt concurrere [quando] plura vitia, sed dicitur (...). Vnde si quis appetit magnos honores ad nocendum alterum, tunc ibi est iniustitia, sed si appeteret magnos honores sibi non debitos, tunc ibi est caymotes, quia est presumptuosus. Vnde caymotes est precipue circa honores excessiue appetendo eos, ubi non (...) sine nocimento alterius. Modo iniustitia est cum nocimento alterius. Et sic non de caymote.

Ad questionem habetur quod sic.

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15 perfectionem] circum *add. sed del.*

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